THE VETERAN;

OR,

MATRIMONIAL FELICITIES.

A married life, to speak the best,
Is all a lottery confest;
Man's an odd compound, after all,
And ever has been since the Fall;
And though a slave in love's soft school,
In wedlock claims his right to rule.

COTTON.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

WHETHER the fault lies in my want of taste, or in the impetuosity of my disposition, or in both, I know not; but I have met with no Modern Novel where I have not skipped many pages of tedious uninteresting Book-making; thoughts of the heroine, — retrospections, — fine feelings, — sentimentals, and indecisions. — And as the most insignificant puppy will sometimes snarl at the majestic Newfoundland dog, I will venture to say that even in the works of our great Northern Tale-writer,

the School-master and Parish-clerk of Gander-cleugh, there are many very dull interregnums between those beautiful scenes which come home to the heart, and which are so naturally and so charmingly written, as to leave all competitors far—far behind. Possibly these heavy pages may be as necessary to a work of this kind, as dark and quiet shades are to a fine picture, making the prominent parts more conspicuously beautiful.

A Novel of last year was lately put into my hands. I found it was learnedly sprinkled with Latin and theological discussions,—so I passed over twenty pages at once; for when I indulge in this kind of light reading, it is for the purpose of charming away a headache: — then, not at

home to any visitors, and desirous of forgetting all the world, and myself in particular, in my interesting book, —think, dear reader, what must be my disappointment, my dismay, at finding, instead of the amusement I promised myself, learned disquisitions which I can neither judge of or comprehend. There is no learning displayed in this simple Narrative,—and for so evident a reason that I need not point it out.

Beyond all things, I sicken at a Novel being written for the sole and deliberate purpose of conveying lessons of morality. Miss Edgeworth's delightful Tales cannot be said to belong to this class. Her perfect delineation of character is in itself a fund of amusement,—and her

country will ever acknowledge her with gratitude and affection.

The following pages were written for amusement. The incidents are generally taken from real life; and if some of them appear overdrawn, I can truly affirm I have not coloured them nearly to the truth. My pen can never do justice to the grotesque appearance of Colonel Desburgh in his whisky, in strong contrast with his handsome young wife. The Barlow scenes would bear much heightening; but I feared my readers would suppose I had been used to too low society to engage their patronage. Yet possibly this very family is now one of the richest in the county. Need I add, they are sought after, courted, and visited by the oldest and the highest of their neighbours?

If my friends have half the amusement in reading, as I have had in witnessing many of the events, I shall be perfectly satisfied in having committed them to the Press.

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OF

THE FIRST VOLUME.

ERRATA TO VOL. I.

Page	Line	
8.	6.	for 1805, read 1806.
26.	21.	" *Now*" to be erased;
45.	3.	for *she*, read *Eliza*.
	4.	for *naïvé* read *naïve*.
47.	20.	for *where beds*, read *where the bed*.
57.	6.	full stop after *attendants*.
	7.	a comma after *town*.
65.	2.	for *their* read *the*.
	3.	after *risibility*, add " *of the friends*."
106.	12.	for *horse* read *pace*.
131.	11.	a comma after *old one*.
163.	14.	for *Julia* read *Ellen*.
195.	1.	" *Now*" to be erased.
237.	19.	for *existence* read *subsistence*.



THE VETERAN

OR,

MATRIMONIAL FELICITIES

CHAP. I.

How blest are we that are not simple men:
Yet Nature might have made me as these are;
Therefore I will not disdain.

Winter's Tale.

Introductory.

In one of the most picturesque villages of Hampshire was situated the estate of Mr. Trevillyan, an elderly gentleman, who had enjoyed it for fifty years. He was respected and beloved by his tenants, and much esteemed by his neighbours. The property, though not extensive, was fertile and valuable: it produced an income of three thousand a year, without impoverishing the land, or distressing the tenants.

This estate had been in the family for more generations than we care to enumerate. It was entailed property; but, fortunately, Mr. Trevillyan had one only child, a son, otherwise it would have devolved to a very distant branch of the family, a Mr. Fortescue, a merchant of London, with whom very little intercourse had been kept up.

This only child was the darling of its doting parents; even during his infancy every possible whim was gratified, and as he grew up, his inclinations were the guide and rule of all around him. No thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Trevillyan, if their son was not the veriest dunce in the school; for his preceptors had strict charge that he was never to be thwarted. Luckily for them, and much more so for himself, nature had endowed him with such talents, that, had he been born to indigence, no doubt the world would have been benefited by them; but, as it happened, he was to be considered

rather as an accomplished young man, than an elegant scholar.

Upon his return from College, however, he was, in the eyes of his parents, the most perfect of human beings. Less interested people took the liberty of differing in opinion; and a disciple of Lavater, and possibly too of Drs. Spurzheim and Gall, might have perceived, something like sternness and severity in his features or cranium; yet as every one near him was devoted to his will, there were few opportunities of detecting the realities of these observations. Nor is it to be wondered at, if a youth so brought up, so idolized, should have imbibed notions of self-importance and vanity, somewhat at variance with the modesty of nature. His manners were polite and gentlemanly; and if he had not that suavity, which belongs to the high-bred man of fashion, yet he was well qualified for good society.

Mr. and Mrs. Trevillyan had now attained the summit of their desires; or if they had a wish, it was to see the beloved of their hearts married; but where was the lady deserving such a treasure? Two or three noblemen in the county had disposable daughters: the highest, the richest, the most beautiful, were selected by the old man as proper objects of choice for his son. Indeed, it is absolutely said, that on one occasion he applied to a noble Duke for his lovely daughter, since married to Lord George ——. Certain it is, he made personal proposals to the Earl of ——, and was so shocked and humiliated at the mortifying coldness of his rejection, that it, together with a violent cold caught in the zeal of the journey, occasioned his death three weeks afterwards. He was sincerely lamented by his neighbours and dependants. To the poor he was a sad loss; for he spent his income amongst them, and interested himself in their comforts and welfare.

Mrs. Trevillyan felt much on the occasion; but her son attended her with more respect than is generally found in spoilt children; in fact, she was the only link of attachment he had; he therefore seldom left her; indeed he could find no other person so entirely devoted to his comforts. She survived her husband only two years, and then left him sole possessor of the property.

Upon her death Mr. Trevillyan found himself almost alone in the world: his father and mother had survived all their near relations; and although there had a few letters passed between them and the Fortescues, yet there had always existed a sort of jealousy and coolness between the families. He had therefore few to sympathise with him; and in the retirement which he observed after his recent loss, the following reflections sprung up in his mind:—"I am arrived at twenty-seven years of age, and ought to feel myself of some consequence in the world. I

have an unencumbered estate, and no poor relations to provide for; but should I die without male heirs, this fine property is entailed on a collateral branch of the family whom I never saw, and for whom I do not care. My talents are far superior to those of most of my acquaintance; and I should certainly comply with the earnest recommendation of my father to devote them to the service of my country in parliament, but that I abhor the servility and meanness I must submit to, to get there. I must condescend to make myself, for a time, the companion of the lowest orders of society; ask favours of those I have ever looked upon as the mere honest agents for my comforts; and possibly, after having undergone all this painful drudgery, be ousted at last by some rich overgrown tallow merchant: insupportable: — "I'll none on't." Yet I feel idle and alone; — I want attachments, interests."

After a pause, he, as if by a violent effort, resumed his soliloquy. — "I must marry — marry whom? My father, good man! got himself affronted by his ambition: and after all, had he succeeded in gaining for me a bride of quality, I dare say I should have found that instead of attending to me, and my humours, she would have given herself airs of birth and fashion, and expected that devotion from me which I am much more willing to receive than to pay. No, no, I'll not seek a wife, but I'll join a little in society, and let the rest take its chance."

CHAP. II.

——— The vows of women
Of no more bondage be, to whom they're made,
Than they are to their virtues — which is nothing.

Troilus and Cressida.

A Removal, and Characters he meets.

With the wise resolutions of the last chapter, our hero set off, accompanied by his servant, John Harding, for Southampton; and took up his abode in the boarding-house there, in the summer of 1806. He met there a mixture of company, — some originals, and some agreeable people; and a man of his consequence was not likely to be overlooked either by ladies or gentlemen. In his person he was tall and well-proportioned: his features were marked by strong natural

sense; but there was a reserve and severity in his countenance, which was somewhat rare in so young a man, and which prevented his being called handsome.

The belle of the company at the boarding-house, and indeed of the whole place, was the beautiful Mrs. Langton, who to a very lovely person added very fascinating manners. When, however, she was off her guard, which was not frequently the case, one might easily discern the vulgarity of very low birth; but her plausibility and fascination were such, that one of her smiles would instantly recover the admiration her forgetfulness had endangered.

Mr. Davenport, her first husband, was a very rich soap-boiler, and had accidentally seen her at the theatre, where he had been so struck with her beauty that he married her, fancying that her gratitude would secure to him her affection and good conduct; but he soon found,

to his great mortification, that the docile girl who promised to wait upon and nurse him, during long and frequent fits of the gout, to which he was subject, had much more inclination to show her fine person, dressed in the most expensive style of fashion, and her superb equipage, which had few rivals in magnificence, to the admiring crowds *his* wealth and *her* beauty attracted, than to rub his ankles, or warm his flannels.

At first, he was so fond of her, that he put no restraint upon her "charming vivacity;" perhaps, too, he was not a little proud of possessing a gem of such dazzling brilliancy, and thought the admiration she universally received was a compliment paid to his taste; and that by yielding a little, she would soon grow tired with dissipation, and become the domestic wife his ailments required. Little did he know of the temper of his rib, ill did he appreciate her virtues. Yet, when he found resolution to chide

her for some neglect of himself, or levities with others, she had always tact enough to win him back to indulgence and good-humour by smiles and caresses.

Thus passed two years, at the end of which Mr. Davenport was seized with a dreadful fit of the gout, and ordered immediately to Bath.—At their marriage he had settled five hundred pounds a year upon his wife, and promised to make them thousands if she behaved well. Before she left town she conducted herself so properly, that he made his will accordingly. Soon after they reached Bath, the gout threatened his stomach, and confined him to his chamber. Could it, under all these circumstances, be expected that so young, so blooming, so gay a creature, was to immure herself, and waste that bloom, by confining herself to a husband's sick room? Certainly not; nor do we believe so preposterous a thought ever entered her head. She conceived she per-

formed her duty with exemplary prudence by visiting him every morning after breakfast, listening patiently to his complaints for ten minutes, and looking in upon him again when she returned from her rides and visits, before she dressed for the evening's amusement. She carefully remembered all the news, told all the names she observed at the Pump-room, and how many new carriages she saw in her drives.

Was not, and ought not this to have been enough to suffice any reasonable man? Mr. Davenport was not reasonable: few men are, we believe, while suffering with the gout; and this must plead his excuse for his impatiencee at what he termed her neglect. Trifles, which his usual indulgence might have overlooked when in health, became crimes of the blackest dye when viewed through the medium of disease, and contemplated in the seclusion of a sick chamber. Her dereliction took sole possession of his

mind, and her daily slights served to increase his irritation. He became jealous of her affections, and suspicious of her virtue; for there were not wanting persons to report her errors.

A nephew, Mr. John Davenport, was his next heir, and stood very high in the estimation of his uncle. To him his marriage had been a source of great dismay; but when the rich man found he was not likely to leave an heir of his own, he redoubled his kindness to Mr. John. This nephew attended him at Bath; and it was not to be supposed there existed any great cordiality between the beauty and this young man. He thought the five hundred pounds a year quite enough, and the five thousand a great deal too much for her. He therefore took care that his wife's conduct should, by some indirect means, find way to his uncle. Mr. Davenport became furious; — he even placed a watch, barbarous man! to observe her,

and he chose this best of all possible agents for the business.

At first the nephew appeared to wish to be silent; but as it was not his interest to veil her levities, he at last suffered himself to report that the lady's time and attention were engrossed by a Col. Langton, a man of noted gallantry and dissipation, but supposed to be possessed of large estates. He attended her to all places of amusement; and it was strongly suspected that these were not their only meetings.

Mr. Davenport's rage knew no bounds: he immediately sent for her; she was no where to be found, although long past midnight: and when she did return home — which was some hours later than she chose to account for — he bitterly upbraided her with her conduct: he recalled to her memory the extreme poverty from which he had raised her, — his profuse generosity, not only to herself, but to her family, whom he was now

supporting, and whom she appeared quite to have forgotten; and he finally assured her, that her settlement was the only money she would ever receive as his widow.

The frail fair One was horror-struck:— she protested her innocence—declared he was dearer to her than existence; and that it was only owing to the excess of her feelings, which were so violent, that she could not repress them when she saw him suffering, and which must have the effect of hurting his spirits, that she absented herself. She used tears, entreaties, and even fits; but Mr. Davenport's suspicions, once thoroughly roused, were not easily soothed. He was proof against all her artifices,—deaf to all her asseverations.

Provoked at finding these her usual auxiliaries fail, she had recourse to the opposite extreme,—vowed vengeance against those who had so basely ca-

lumniated her;—and she cast a glance of no very amicable nature upon the nephew:—bitterly reproached Mr. Davenport for listening to such base slanders; yet showed no disposition to amend—made no promise of reformation; and this was a solitary instance of her sincerity: had she made them, she never would have kept them.

Finding that her violence and her tears were equally ineffectual, and assured, from her knowledge of her husband's character, that he would keep his word, she retired to her own room in great agitation and despair. She had only one hope, that of his speedy dissolution, before he had strength to make the threatened alteration of his will. She did not however do as many weak women would have done in her case,—retire to examine her heart and conduct, and devise means of recovering her suspected character,—but to form

plans of ekeing out her fortunes from other sources.

Her determination was soon taken; and as the fiat respecting her jointure was but too likely to be realised, she was willing to secure herself a rich protector elsewhere. With true and laudable spirit, therefore, she attired herself in the most becoming habit, and hastened the next morning to the rendezvous with Col. Langton: she was behind her time; and he was waiting with an impatience which was favourable to her views.

What passed at this interview it is needless to trouble ourselves about, except that the lady reported her husband so much worse that he could not survive many days. She carefully omitted, and perhaps quite forgot, in the emotion of the moment, to mention the scene which had passed; — much less did the alteration of the will present itself to her memory. Most likely if it had,

she would not have thought such a trifle worth mentioning to a man of his fortune.

The Colonel, warmed by the hope of soon sharing her large jointure, determined to make the matter as certain as circumstances would allow; and a mutual agreement was drawn up and signed, for their marriage within six months after Mr. Davenport's death. This done, she returned home in mental triumph, fancying that she had thus taken her charms to a much better market the second than the first match. Mr. D. however contrived to live, contrary to her report, many weeks, during which she entertained herself as usual.

The report of her large jointure, which she took care should be no secret, and her great beauty, rendered her an object of general interest in a high and respectable circle; where, as long as she conducted herself with apparent propriety, and lived under her husband's

roof, it was nobody's business to inquire further.

Mr. D. lived five weeks after the signing of the agreement. At his dissolution, his widow declared herself quite unprepared for such a stroke: she had known him recover from what she conceived so many worse attacks, that she could not believe his danger was so imminent. In short, she played her part of distress very prettily.

This finished, she busied herself in suiting her sable dress to her fine shape; and this amused her distracted thoughts from the loss of her dear husband: and surely this was much more meritorious conduct, than dimming the lustre of her eyes by unavailing sorrow. Doubtless—if sackcloth and ashes—fasting and prayer,—could have recalled him to life, she would willingly have devoted herself to the amusement: but the decree was as sure as that which had deprived

her of her jointure, and there was no alternative.

She was in due time invited by Mr. John Davenport to witness the reading of the will; but knowing, or at least guessing pretty near the truth, she chose rather to be left in ignorance of its contents. So she returned an answer, that the extreme anguish she suffered for the unexpected and heavy loss she had sustained, rendered it quite impossible she could support so distressing a scene. She wished pecuniary subjects might not be mentioned to her until her spirits were in better train (if ever they would be) to think of them; and at all events, when she felt herself able, she would apply to him for information.

Mr. Davenport was not the dupe of all this duplicity; but as he cared little about her, and was in full possession of his uncle's property, he suffered her to play her own game, and therefore

never again mentioned the subject of the will. And he had even the delicacy to be silent to others as well as to her; for he had received injunctions from his uncle, if she conducted herself respectably, to allow her a thousand a year, in addition to the five hundred, as long as she continued unmarried.

CHAP. III.

'Twere good I think to steal our marriage.

Taming of the Shrew.

A Promising Wedding.

COLONEL LANGTON, whose pecuniary wants happened now to be very pressing, found the widow's supposed five thousand pounds per annum a sugar-plum much to his taste. He was aware how many other sharks would be looking out for this bait; and anxiously waited an interview, when he might fix an early day for appropriating it to himself. He knew too how little women of her stamp were to be relied upon, and therefore hastened to her, and urged his suit with such lover-like assiduity, that the reluctant fair One, after a world of

doubt and hesitation, between her affection for him, and the indelicacy of marrying so soon, agreed to an immediate, and very private marriage. Very little did he think he was playing the very game she wished and intended; and under these happy auspices the marriage took place.

It was not to be expected the Colonel should have any delicacy about asking for his wife's fortune, and he immediately waited upon Mr. Davenport to announce the event, and to settle accounts. The young man was not very much surprised, for he had marked the progress of the business; nor was he much grieved at a circumstance which saved him a thousand a year; but when he disclosed the real state of the case to the astonished bridegroom, no words can do justice to his fury: he was nearly mad with rage, and for some moments lost his speech; but it soon returned to vent itself in execra-

tions upon his own folly.—When his violence had somewhat subsided, he asked if Mrs. Davenport had been privy to the alteration of the will; Mr. Davenport answered, that he believed she suspected it. The Colonel snatched up his hat, and hastened to his lovely bride, and bounteously bestowed blessings upon her for outdoing him in chicanery:—to be duped where he meant to be the duper! and by a woman too!

The humiliated Fair, who had been preparing herself for this scene, threw herself on her knees, declared she knew nothing of the will—was quite ignorant of the alteration; and if she was cut off with so slender a pittance as her original settlement, nothing but her husband's suspicions of the connection which subsisted between them, could have induced such a change; therefore it was ungenerous to upbraid her for what was consequent upon their joint indiscretion.

The bridegroom was not disposed to listen to such sound arguments; he upbraided her with the levity of her conduct even to himself.

The beautiful lady bathed her bridal dress with her tears; but finding these not quite so potent as she expected, she took up the cause in another point of view — with the most winning accents she told him, that although her income was so inferior to his, she would by economy and prudence, make it serve for her own dress and pocket money; and as he had married her for love, she trusted his affection would stand the test of this disappointment, particularly as his possessions were so large that he would not feel the loss.

He interrupted her in no very complimentary tone. "Marry for love! Devil a bit, I assure you. I never loved but one woman in my life; and as for my large possessions, I shall be glad to know where you'll find them. Marry for

love!" added he, as he gave a whistle and turned on his heel, "I need not have married for that, I think."

He then told her that he had depended upon her money to pay off a debt he had incurred at the gaming table, and in his vehemence let fall some words which let her into the real state of the case.

The bride's astonishment and dismay were quite equal to that of her husband. She was no longer the elegant, interesting, soothing suppliant. She instantly rose from her humble attitude; and passion getting the better of her recently learnt gentility, she indulged herself with abusing him with the vulgarity which suited her origin.

Each had calculated on their personal charms for recruiting their finances,—that medium was now lost in a terribly bad speculation, and nothing now remained for them but to make the best of so bad a bargain.—She agreed to give him up three hundred pounds which she had by her when her husband died;

and he allowed her to keep possession of her five hundred pounds a year; they parted on their respective means, — she went to London, he to Cheltenham, and then to Ireland.

In town, however, Mrs. Langton found those doors shut against her, which used to fly open at her approach, — and where she was received, it was with so much coldness that she determined to try another quarter. In the spring she went to Cheltenham, — she played well and high; and if she did not move in the same society she used to do while the indulged wife of the rich Mr. Davenport, yet she contrived to comfort herself much to her satisfaction, for the space of two years; at the end of which, we find her at Southampton, nothing impaired in beauty or goodness.

Our Venus was classically attended, — her three Graces were in her train, — the Misses Dennison were fine looking dashing young ladies, attired in the

height of fashion, and worthy, to all appearance, the divinity whose satellites they were. They were the daughters of Captain Dennison, who having had the misfortune to lose his wife, a very pretty woman, during their infancy, and having no female relations with whom he could leave them, he placed them at a large boarding-school, from whence they had no home to go to.

Their father visited them as often as his military duties would allow; and as he marked the progressive improvement in their persons, he doubted not their intellectual accomplishments kept pace with their beauty. He was no great judge of feminine acquirements, and gave due credit to the accounts he heard of their proficiency.

They remained at school until their father's regiment was quartered at ——, where, as they had the prospect of being stationary for some time, Mrs. Roberts, the wife of a lieutenant, offered to take charge of them, — an offer

Captain Dennison gladly accepted; for he was a very affectionate father, and much wished for the society of his children. But this was not mending their situation, — military circles being, we believe, the least calculated to form the female character.

Whatever principles they imbibed at school were certainly not improved here; — they learnt many things, and witnessed many conversations of which they ought not to have had the slightest idea.

Thus passed two years in gradual improvement. Their father taught them billiards, riding, and driving, — in all which he made it a point they should excel; and he was quite happy when he saw them mounted upon the most restive horses of the corps.

He was particularly attentive, too, to the grace of their carriage and action. He spent many hours in teaching them to walk, and flattered himself they were

perfect. But he lived but a short time to observe the benefit of his lessons. A fever which he caught in the service some years ago, and from which he had never perfectly recovered, terminated his existence, when his eldest daughter Ann had attained her twenty-fourth year; the second, Sophy, twenty-two; and Eliza, nineteen.

He left them fifteen hundred pounds each, constituting Ann the guardian of Eliza.

Instead of husbanding their little fortunes with economy, they determined to take them to market; and as there were no young men in the regiment worth captivating, they resolved to take a wider field of action.

They persuaded Mrs. Roberts to go with them to Bath, and stay with them until they were settled in a boarding-house. Here, alas! they showed their fine busts in all the nakedness of fashion without effect. The men had little worlds of their own to move in, and were

engaged in other pursuits. They removed to another house, yet to no purpose; — the young men there were fortune-hunters; — the old all invalids, thinking and talking more about their own sufferings than attending to them.

For the former, our young ladies had few attractions; they were upon the same scent; and, despairing of better things, they applied themselves even to the gouty and hypochondriac, smoothed their cushions, placed their footstools, listened to their complaints, but with little success.

Miss Sophy had indeed flattered herself that, by her unwearied assiduity and attention to a very old gouty man, who was immensely rich, she was in a fair way to become Mrs. Jeffreys. But although he availed himself very readily of her kindness in reading newspaper after newspaper, which she performed with exemplary patience till quite hoarse, — though she gave him her seat when he

entered the room, if it happened to be near the fire, — yet, when the ungrateful wretch recovered, he very coolly left Bath without making any matrimonial overtures.

This disgusted the trio. They left Bath in dudgeon, and went to Cheltenham; but there seemed a spell upon all their honest matrimonial speculations — none of them answered: and meeting Mrs. Langton there, whose sentiments appeared similar to their's; and she offering to take them under her auspices to Southampton, they all adjourned to that place.

There was, however, a tacit agreement between them and the *Grass Widow*, never, by any chance, to interfere with her. The sisters, too, were to yield to each other in seniority. Sophy was not to beguile her sister Ann's beaux,—and Eliza's charms were not to come into play until after her sisters' had failed.

These ladies attracted the attention

of an Irish Baronet of broken fortune and dissipated habits.

Sir John Neerdowel had the most prepossessing manners, and the most elegant address; and these assisted him in ekeing out his finances by cards and billiards.

Mrs. Langton immediately attached fortune to the Baronet, and secured him solely to herself.

Besides him, there was a Mr. Lacket, who was very industrious in finding out the weight of each lady's purse; and, just arrived before Mr. Trevillyan, a Mr. Fanshaw, a gentleman of very large fortune in Worcestershire, bred to the Bar, but not practising; and possessing, as he afterwards bragged, so callous a heart, that he *thought* he could flutter round the brightest flame without singeing his wings.

There were other persons in the house of whom we need not speak, as they do not find a place in this history.

With these, however, our young ladies

were engaged when Mr. Trevillyan appeared among them.

His property was too near to allow them to be long in ignorance of who he was.

The damsels began to slight their former flirts to throw for higher prizes: but not caring entirely to abandon any, they appeared to make a sort of compromise, "when Mr. Trevillyan and Mr. Fanshaw are away, I will accept of you."

Miss Dennison's turn came first. She became the steady, prudent, gentlewoman, — loved the country, — doted upon fine views, — and was never tired of looking at that before her. Hampshire was certainly the finest county that she had seen: and though she had heard a great deal of Worcestershire, she thought it could not surpass this. She did not know how she should find resolution to quit so sweet a spot.

This would not do: — so now came

Sophy, who was a perfect Lady Lydia Languish. She studied the elegant; poetry, purling streams, and sentiment were her hobbies; —loved Ossian to her heart;—and had little Moore's love songs by rote.

All this was played off with no better success: the reign of sentiment seems to have passed by.—Mr. Fanshaw, indeed, sat by her, and attended her; but she had penetration enough to perceive it was merely for present amusement.

Eliza was by far the handsomest: she was all life and simplicity, said every thing that came uppermost, and consequently many things which she ought not to say. She never spared the feelings of another, if she could raise a laugh at their expense; but all was said and done with so much apparent innocence and *naïveté*, that no one could suspect artifice in such guileless simplicity:—though there was more pertness than wit in her remarks, yet few

could help laughing at the drollery of her manner.

There was a gentleman who made a great noise in the mastication of his food, she called to him across the table, "Do you know, sir, that you put me very much in mind of one of our ancient poets?"

"Indeed, ma'am!" said the flattered youth, "you do me much honour by the comparison. Pray, of which do I remind you?"

"Of Chaw-sir," said Eliza, speaking it as distinctly as possible.

Another time Mr. Trevillyan and herself were watching a gentleman at the lower end of the table, helping himself over and over again to a dish before him, — "Well," said Mr. Trevillyan, "I wish him well through it."

"No, no," said Eliza, "you mean you wish it well through him."

There was a lady who used to carry her hand in an aukward position, she called her the "Fig-leaf."

Mr. Trevillyan was in no danger of being drawn in by the two elder, nor did he ever dream of falling in love with Eliza; but he was pleased with her liveliness, and flattered by the distinguished attention she was beginning to pay him: — upon his first appearance she had hardly noticed him. He attended her in preference to the rest — rode with her — took lessons of billiards from her — and danced with her: and in all these she excelled.

One evening, when they were resting from the dance, and apart from the rest of the company, she said, "What a handsome man Sir John Neerdowel is, and how animated Mrs. Langton appears while dancing with him! They seem made for each other. Don't you think they'd make a handsome couple?"

"Very handsome," answered he; "but I've heard Mrs. Langton is married already."

"O yes," returned Eliza, "and a cruel case it is. She had five thousand pounds

a year, and he married her merely to get it, and then left her immediately."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Trevillyan; "had she then no settlement?"

"I believe not," answered she. "Immediately that Mr. Davenport, her first husband, was taken ill, Colonel Langton, well knowing what her jointure would be, paid her unremitted attention; and as she only married for money, it is not to be supposed her affections were Mr. Davenport's. — Colonel Langton was very handsome — very engaging; so every thing was settled for their marriage before her husband died. But she feared the world would be ill-natured enough to censure her for marrying so soon, and the ceremony was performed very suddenly — very privately; and as he gave her to understand that he was a man of very large fortune, she never troubled her head about settlements."

"But what became of her after they separated?"

"They took different routes, he to Dublin, she to town, where she was the delight of every one, she was so gay."

"And you think she was right in so doing?" asked Mr. Trevillyan, in rather an equivocal voice.

"O dear! no," said Eliza, immediately catching his thoughts; "she would have done much better had she lived quietly. I think she was very wrong, — indeed I often think her reprehensible."

"And yet you chose her for a chaperon to a public place."

"No, indeed," said she, quickly; "I told my sisters we had much better go alone, for that I feared we should be implicated in her indiscretions, but they said I was a child, and knew nothing of the world; that if I did not choose to accompany them, Ann, (who is my

guardian,) would send me to school again. I'm sure at times I am quite miserable at what I see; but they say we are neither bolster or pillow, and that as long as she is received well in society, we have nothing more to do with it. I am sure you think we have done wrong, — and I shall be quite wretched if *you* condemn us. O, Mr. Trevillyan," added she, with her most winning accents, "if you would but advise me! — I have no friend, no protector; nobody to care for me." Just then she cast her fine eyes filled with tears to the face of her interested companion: one of these precious drops fell upon his sleeve; he caught her hand and pressed it between his, and it was lucky for him that they were joined at this moment by the rest of the party, before he had time to answer.

It is true he was naturally harsh, cold, and reserved, but he could not resist the fascination of a beautiful girl appeal-

ing to him with so much confidence; besides, he fancied there was a similarity in their situations.

During the evening he was more absent than usual; and when at night he threw off his coat, he looked for the spot hallowed by the tear. It had left no trace, but he knew the place, and we fear we must record his weakness in carrying it to his lips.

During the night Eliza haunted his imagination; she was so graceful! so simple! yet with so much good sense and discernment, that she detected and condemned the improprieties she witnessed. — So young, and yet so discreet! Would it not be cruel to leave her in such dangerous society? and yet could he marry a woman whose connections might disgrace him? Still there was something so innocent in her application, such a compliment to his judgment, — perhaps too the girl really liked him — loved him! — at any rate she must think more highly of

him than of others, for he had never known her at all familiar with those gentlemen who paid her the greatest attention. "Yes, certainly," said he, as he strode across the room, "certainly the sweet girl does love me, and if I was to marry her I could easily separate her from her family."

This reflection, however, did not quite realise those dreams of happiness he had contemplated; nor did he feel satisfied of himself: he determined to be very cautious, and to assure himself of the young lady's worth before he committed himself.

With this prudent resolution he went down to breakfast, the rigid censor, the scrutinising observer. But he had no occasion for all this sturdiness,—the object of it did not appear, and when he inquired the cause, her sister Sophy said, "she could not think what had befallen her, that she had been walking about the room all night, and when pressed for

an explanation of such extraordinary conduct she burst into tears, and said, she had exposed herself to contempt, and that she should never be happy again." Sophia added, "I supposed it some childish folly, so I left her to it."

Mr. Trevillyan rose from his seat, went to the window, returned to his chair, and soon after left the room.

He ordered his horses, and without sending to Mr. Fanshaw to invite him to accompany him, as he usually did, he set off with only his servant John Harding, who was admitted to familiarity, having been brought up from childhood in his father's house, and being nearly of the same age with his young master, had been allowed to be his play-fellow in early days. Mr. Trevillyan rode much faster than usual, but he could not outride the phantom of Eliza Dennison, which attended him every where. He slackened his pace, entered into conversation with John, talked of Mr. Fanshaw's

horses, of the one Miss Dennison rode the day before — remarked how uncommonly well they sat their horses, and how boldly they rode.

"Aye, aye," said John, "I think if they were not quite so bold any way, they would be none the worse gentlefolks; to be sure, sir, they do say strange things of them down stairs, — why there is a servant in the house who lived in the boarding house with them at Bath, and he do say unaccountable things of them; — that Miss Sophy thought to catch his master, Mr. Jeffreys, the rich Herefordshire gentleman, who owns land out of mind. He did not know how to get rid of her, so he just ordered his carriage, and left Bath without taking leave of her."

This answer of John's was by no means in unison with his master's thoughts, so he spurred his horse and hastened home, but John's remarks went with him, and

were somehow associated with the aforesaid phantom.

At dinner she made her appearance, but not the lively *naïve* girl who made them laugh by her comical observations; but with pale cheeks and languid eyes, swoln by recent weeping. Instead of taking her seat near him as usual, she placed herself between her sister Ann, and another lady, who were vainly trying to persuade her to eat, and as soon as decency permitted after dinner, she pleaded indisposition, rose, and left the room; no look was cast upon him, she even seemed as if she wished to avoid his eye. In such conduct there could be no artifice, no coquetry, it would be barbarous to suppose it. At tea he would sit by her; and during the evening he paid her the most delicate attentions; — was fearful of a breath of air visiting her too roughly; — and when she was about to retire, he pleaded so strongly that she would remain with them, that she suf-

fered herself to be persuaded, more as it appeared to oblige him, than from her own wish. Thus she did not for a moment lose her self-possession, and no finished actress could have played the part better. She had all the success she expected.

Mr. Trevillyan was softened — delighted—won. He now seldom left her; and the sisters, at the end of each day, interrogated her as to the declaration: they took care that he should not want the opportunity of making it. — In truth, Mr. Trevillyan seemed to have made up his mind to the evils he foresaw; and good John Harding, who had, from his first suspicion, taken great care to slide into his master's ear every thing he could think of against the lady, began to have serious apprehensions as to the result.

About this time, preparations were making for the reception of a lady and her invalid daughter, who required a

double-bedded room:—there was but one such in the house, and that was occupied by the Misses Dennison. Application was made to them for its release; and as two rooms were offered to them at the same price they now paid for one, they good-humouredly gave it up.—Two days afterwards the ladies arrived; and great curiosity was excited by the report of the servants—(for they did not make their appearance at table that day)—they said that the young lady was exceedingly beautiful, but very ill.

Now it happened that Sophia and Eliza Dennison were put into a small room, thinly partitioned off the larger one occupied by Mr. Trevillyan; yet the division was so nicely papered on both sides (excepting where beds stood *dos à dos*, only separated by half-inch boards, with chinks between them), that without minute observation, few would have detected the nearness of the ap-

proximation. — Mr. Trevillyan heard somebody talking; but it was not until he was fairly in bed, that he was favoured with the following dialogue: —

——— "So sure of him! — why don't you bring him to some explanation? I would never let him dangle after me in that way. — He'll flirt with you as long as he finds it agreeable, and then he'll leave you ——"

"Softly, softly, Sophia. Remember you and Ann were in such haste to secure old Jeffreys, that you thought to hook him before he had tasted the bait; and after you had both studied all his whims and caprices for nearly two months, he slipt through your fingers."

"Well, child, I do strongly suspect that without things are brought forward immediately, you will never get him to marry you."

"Now Soph don't be envious, — you know I never took him in play till Ann and you had tried your powers in vain —

I honourably kept to the agreement, — Ann's prudence and love of Hampshire, and your affected sentimentals, were as dust before the wind; while I by a few ingenious manœuvres caught him at once. You see, Soph, child as you think me, I am wiser in my vocation than either of you; — why, give me but time, and I'd engage to cheat that Mr. Fanshaw of his boasted callous heart, indeed at one time I had a great mind to begin with him instead of waiting my turn with Trevillyan, but I was not so sure of his fortune —and even now, should any thing go wrong with my swain, I dare say I should take to the other."

"Upon my word, Eliza, you are so elated by the success of your schemes, that your conceit is intolerable, — I beg, however, that you will take care of your own concerns, and leave Fanshaw to others. I have not yet done with him, and if I get him, I shall not have much reason to envy you. Fanshaw is extremely handsome,

and Trevillyan has a very forbidding countenance.

"Be as high as you please, Miss Soph, — I'll admit Fanshaw much the handsomest, far the most agreeable —and I will promise you not to give up a certainty for the experiment of catching him; but I can tell you, without you change your mode of attack, you will never get him, — your languishments and affectation will never do, — try the sprightly, and exert yourself as you used to do before old Jeffreys, and —"

"Pray do not mention him," impatiently interrupted Sophy. "I hate the very name."

"Sophy dear," said Eliza in a tone of provoking archness, "which do you hate the most, the name or the disappointment? I rather think if his carriage and four was waiting your acceptance, you'd condescend to take it."

"Will you be quiet, you little plague!" returned the irritated Sophia; "I'm sure

you need not talk, — you have been as industrious in your vocation, as you are pleased to call it, as I have, and perhaps with as little success; and I'm sure I have assisted you instead of laughing at you. — Remember your melting day, when you schooled me into saying you had been up weeping all night like any pretty love-lorn damsel."

"Yes," cried Eliza, with exultation, "I do remember and glory in that day; it was certainly the *ne plus ultra* of good acting *that* secured him; and as I do confess my obligations to you in that, I'll do my best, now my own conquest is made, to advance you with Fanshaw. — I really must have you married this year, or you'll get as old-maidish as Ann. — Have you any idea he is taken with you?"

"Truly I have my doubts," said Sophia; "when he is with me, I think he does like me — he says a hundred fine things to me — but when he leaves me,

there is no anxiety to return, and I can discover no uneasiness when I laugh and talk with another: yet when we walk or ride, he keeps by my side, and always takes care I should ride one of his horses."—

"Faint hopes, I own, Soph; but don't despair, I see he is not to be won by the ordinary mode, if you could once interest his feelings—that would be the medium of obtaining him. Have you thought of any scheme?"

"Yes, of a thousand.—O, Eliza, if I could attach him, I really could love him very much."

"Hold there—one word of love on your part and I declare off; no woman can play a good game, who is too much interested in its success.—Had I loved Trevillyan, do you think I ever should have made any thing of him? Oh no, keep cool yourself, and you will probably succeed.—You know you are to ride

one of Fanshaw's horses to-day — could you not contrive to get yourself thrown?"

"Thanks, Eliza, but I'm not going to endanger my face or person, I promise you; so unless your fruitful genius could hit upon some more gentle expedient, you will not much expedite my views. — What do you think of telling him of an offer I have received from a man of fortune?"

"Too stale, Sophy, that will never do — it must be by surprise that he is taken, he is too cautious to be taken by tame measures, — you are surely active enough to throw yourself off your horse without injury, or my father's lessons have been thrown away; and suppose you faint, — I'm sure you may do a great deal in this way."

"Well," said Sophy, "I'll sleep upon it, and if nothing better occurs, I'll try."

CHAP. IV.

He did look far into the service of the time,
And was disciplined of the best.
Such a man
Might be a copy to these younger times.
All's Well that Ends Well.

An Original.

It is difficult to say which was most annoyed, Mr. Trevillyan's affection or his vanity, — he slept little, — dreamt of the blue devils, — rose early and walked out; he had not proceeded far before he spied Mr. Fanshaw, he longed for the pleasure of relating the foregoing conversation, and therefore hastened to meet him, and then unfolded the schemes meditating against them.

After a long and hearty laugh at the good fortune which had discovered the

machinations of these innocent damsels, and that Mr. Fanshaw had been informed of as much as Mr. Trevillyan thought necessary, (for he totally forgot, or at least omitted, the comparison of personal charms between him and his auditor, no doubt considering it of too little importance to find place in a conversation between two lords of the creation,) they consulted what should be done, — after a good deal of joking on the occasion, they determined the ride should by all means take place.

"I would not lose the somerset for fifty guineas," said Fanshaw.

"I would not have lost the conversation for hundreds," said Trevillyan.

Upon their entering the breakfast-room, however, all other ideas were totally lost in the contemplation of a most interesting object. Miss Mordant was about eighteen years of age, tall, finely proportioned, and extremely elegant; she had a brilliant hectic colour, which varied

every time she spoke or was addressed; and when silent it gave way to the softest tint, — her skin was so transparent that she appeared more like the ethereal vision of another world, than an inhabitant of this. It was impossible to look at her without feeling the deepest interest in every change of her beautiful countenance. Her mother watched her with the greatest anxiety, — yet it appeared the wish of these amiable women to hide their distress and suffering from each other.

It may be supposed that neither Mrs. Langton or the Graces were enchanted with so formidable a rival in beauty, — and it gave our two younger damsels an impetus to pursue their respective conquests.

Mr. Fanshaw, as soon as Miss Mordant retired, offered one of his horses to Sophia; it was accepted with glee, and we are not quite sure that he did not order him an extra feed.

While they were preparing for the ride, the sisters had the pleasure of learning the history of Miss Mordant, which greatly quieted their apprehensions, and which they determined to detail as soon as possible to their attendants, when they were outside of the town. Miss Dennison opened:

"Miss Mordant would be a very handsome girl if she were in health, poor thing! they say there is no chance of her ever recovering. I have been listening to a most love-lorn history. She was upon the eve of marriage with a Mr. Fortescue, a young man of property, and eventually of large fortune, if the present possessor dies without an heir;" Mr. Trevillyan found an odd sensation in his throat; — "however, he was the junior partner of a large mercantile house in London. The clothes were all made, — the house taken and furnished, — when, just three weeks before the appointed day, he, as the youngest of the firm, was

called upon to go to Malta upon urgent business. It seems the parting was dreadful, but as there was every chance of his returning in the course of three or four months, it was deemed useless to expose her to the fatigue of the voyage. He went, —arrived there safely, —transacted the business to the satisfaction of the house, — and wrote to Miss Mordant, requesting she and her mother would meet him at Portsmouth at such a time. Thither they went, and the first news they heard at the inn where they stopped, was that the ship was lost, and all her crew perished.—This was communicated so bluntly by the waiter, who little suspected the interest they had in her, that Miss Mordant has declined ever since,—they say she is in a deep consumption, and cannot get over it. Is it not a melancholy story?"

"Dreadful," said Mr. Fanshaw.

Mr. Trevillyan was silent, —perhaps he felt less for Mr. Fortescue than he would

have dône for any other individual. The ladies did not care to nourish the interest they saw growing, and soon found means to pair off with their respective companions; but there was a look passed between Eliza and Sophia, before the former cantered off, which did not escape the observation of our friends, who kept close together, and who now determined to give the latter every possible facility of executing her plan, which it must be owned she performed to admiration;—for, while they pretended to be deeply engaged in discussing the merits of different soils for different grain, they kept her always in view; she, however, found means to set her horse capering,—lost her seat,—and fell,—giving a loud scream which reached the whole party. She had dexterously contrived to take a very graceful attitude, and display a very handsome leg and foot.

Our heroes immediately dismounted;

and John Harding came up with Mr. Fanshaw's servant.

"Well," said John, "I never saw the like of this. — Talk of a good horsewoman, indeed! One could almost believe it was done o' purpose. — A nice soft bit of the road too." And then, with perfect indifference of the lady, he went to the horse, which was quietly grazing by the road side.

The group immediately gathered round the fallen fair; and the two friends were perfectly ridiculous in their officious attentions. — She fainted, and appeared quite insensible: her hat fell off, and her ringlets half-shaded her face. Eliza busied herself with all due agitation — called upon her "dear sister" — rubbed her hands, and tried to support her; but being unequal to do it, she requested Mr. Fanshaw to assist her. This was too much: and to prevent the laugh, which he could not suppress, being observed, he employed

himself in getting some water from the ditch, (which was certainly not very limpid,) in a large dock leaf, and he brought it to Miss Ann, requesting her to sprinkle the "poor sufferer's" face with it. Miss Dennison, who was not in the secret, was really alarmed, and used the water, dirty as it was, profusely. Sophy could have half-killed her for very passion, — and this emotion did not escape our friends. Their mirth was now quite ungovernable; and although they tried to hide it in expressions of condolence and sympathy, yet a half-smothered laugh was very soon detected by Sophia, who, though engaged in acting her part to perfection, had still time to mark progress; and fearing to overdo it, she thought proper to recover gradually, and in due time proposed mounting again.

To this, however, Mr. Fanshaw strongly objected, declaring the animal was too vicious for so "precious a burthen."

John Harding eagerly seconded this opinion; and added that "there was a cart, or something like it, coming." On turning to his companion, he said, loud enough for all to hear him, "if that won't do, the Fly waggon, which comes from London in six days, won't be more than a quarter of an hour before it comes by."

This roused our heroine, who, however, pretended not to hear it. She rose with assistance,—put up her tresses, and arranged her hat,— declared she was not much hurt, but felt rather sick and faint.

The carriage which John had perceived now drove up, and a more grotesque set-out never was seen. The driver was an old man, nearly seventy, dressed in a full military uniform, which appeared exactly copied from the signs frequently seen at country alehouses of the King of Prussia, or the Duke of Marlborough — one such we well remem-

ber upon Heddington Hill, near Oxford: an immense cocked hat, twice the width of the shoulders of the wearer, bound with broad tarnished gold lace; the coat similarly ornamented, which appeared to have lain at the bottom of the chest of an old-clothes man for a century; striped blue and white thick silk stockings upon his spindle shanks; large buckles, and high shoes. The carriage was worthy the driver — built sixty years ago, and then denominated a Whisky. It bore evident marks of patching; the harness eked out with cord, and quite unconscious of blacking. The steed was the best of the appointment: it had been an old charger, and from good care and slow driving, still retained traces of his former beauty.

Colonel Desburgh stopped his machine, when he arrived at the spot where so many had alighted, — he begged to know if he could be of any use. Mr.

Trevillyan proposed for him to drive Miss Sophy home. Eliza would not hear of it. She was "sure if Mr. Fanshaw would walk his horse quietly by the side of Sophy's, the animals would go very quietly together." But she had been too busy to observe as much as her sister had done — who, perplexed at the merriment of the two gentlemen, and dreading detection, accepted the offered place.

Into this extraordinary Whisky, then, our heroine was handed; and as it slowly moved on, the party, with one accord, burst into an ungovernable fit of laughter.

Eliza was quite astonished at the failure of so well laid a scheme. She heard the laugh — indeed she joined in it, as the Whisky drove away. She proposed riding home; but Mr. Fanshaw did not offer to attend her. Indeed, there was more of mirth than anxiety in his coun-

tenance—and her expressions of interest for Sophia, only seemed to increase their risibility.

Colonel Desburgh was a man of great humanity, and very gentlemanly manners; but one of the oddest of human creatures: he was very rich, and, to himself, very parsimonious;—for while he spent thousands in benevolent purposes, it grieved him to the heart to part with a shilling for himself. A man of strict honour, according to the old acceptation of the word, and ready to do any one a service, provided he may do it in his own way—that is privately.—He was now engaged in an adventure that suited his knight-errantry,—he was the protector of a beautiful young lady,—though it must be confessed it was at present somewhat sullied by the ditch-water, which left evident marks of its visit upon her face and clothes,—he tried to sooth her—but overcome with disappointment and mortification she burst into tears.—He was

much distressed, and as he was going to Southampton for pleasure, he determined to take up his abode in the same house.

Their entrance into the town was so ludicrous that they attracted great observation, and poor Sophy, already at the lowest ebb of despair, begged to alight and be allowed to walk home—but her guardian was much too gallant to permit this—and thinking the motion might be too rough for her, he walked his horse very deliberately through the streets. The Colonel attributed her increase of agitation to the effect of her accident, and never supposed he could have the least share in promoting it: and he treated her with the most indulgent kindness.

Sophy, in her present humiliated state of mind, felt, and was grateful to him for it,—she sat with him at the Boarding House until the trampling of horses announced the return of the party,—and then too conscious to dare meeting the

heroes, she retired to her own apartment, deprecating her folly, and mentally bestowing many obliging wishes on her sister, who had suggested the expedient. Perhaps, had she joined her at this juncture, these kind wishes might have found vent audibly. But Eliza, sure of the ferment brewing in Sophy's mind, and knowing her temper none of the softest, wisely forbore making any attempt at consolation, but allowed Ann to go to her alone; and as Sophia thought it unnecessary to make Ann acquainted with the business, — she restrained her reproaches, and made indisposition the plea for keeping her room, — and to say the truth, she did not escape some severe bruises.

Eliza was by no means without her share of uneasiness, —Mr. Trevillyan had preferred riding aloof with Mr. Fanshaw, to attending upon her; there appeared something between them, which she could not fathom, and she began to wish

she had taken Sophy's advice, and secured him at the beginning.

When they had returned home she remained upon her horse, for him to hand her off as usual, instead of which the Gentlemen gave their's to their servants and walked off arm in arm, as if there were no others to attend to: — this quite alarmed her,—and she determined to take an opportunity of consulting her sister Ann as soon as she returned from Sophia.

Poor Ann, who was by far the best of the three, was quite dismayed;—she had observed the defalcation,— but she trusted it was some foolish love-quarrel,— which as usual would end in the renewal of love: — yet she could not help blaming her sister for risking it.

Great then was her distress when she found this defalcation was the result of a consultation between the friends. She thought the sooner an explanation took place the better, for it might be in her power to do or say something which

might remove any ill impression he had imbibed — and she determined immediately to seek an interview with him.

At dinner he sat in his usual place, and though he talked to Eliza, yet he paid her no more attention than any one else; so at tea Ann took an opportunity of requesting he would take a walk with her, which he readily assented to, and away they went. She soon began by speaking of the very forlorn situation of herself and sisters — left very early in life with few friends to direct them, or even to interest themselves about them, — they were to make their own way in the world, — that she, being the eldest, felt not only for herself, but a responsibility and deep anxiety for the welfare of her sisters, — that Eliza had ever been her particular charge, — her ward, — and she felt she should not be doing her duty by her, if she allowed her affections and happiness to be trifled with. That Mr. Trevillyan must be well as-

sured of the interest he had gained in her heart,—she had herself observed the growth of his influence over her guileless mind, and should have removed her from his society, had she not observed, in common with others who had seen them together, such unequivocal instances of attachment on his part, that she could entertain no doubts of his intentions;—that she had observed the sudden change in his conduct which had surprised her, but that she relied upon his honour and generosity to realise those expectations his conduct had given rise to;—that the dreadful instance they had before them, of a beautiful girl sinking prematurely to the grave from a disappointment of this kind, made her shudder for what might be the fate of her beloved sister, whose affections were as warm, and whose heart was as tender, as Miss Mordant's could be.

Miss Dennison had expected an interruption every moment from her *com-*

pagnon de voyage, —she had made a pause at the end of every sentence, hoping he would reply, — but observing no wish of the kind, — she again asked him if young women, left so unprotected as they were, were proper objects to be trifled with?

There was a calmness in Mr. Trevillyan's manner of receiving this reproach which did not yield her much confidence; but when he begged Mr. Fanshaw might be a witness to his answer, she said, with some warmth, — "With Mr. Fanshaw, sir, I have nothing to do, — but he, as well as every man of honour, will feel for us."

Mr. Trevillyan hastened to the house, disengaged his friend from Mrs. Langton, to whom he was talking, and drew him to the spot where Miss Dennison was waiting. He told him nothing of what had passed, but Mr. Fanshaw had watched Miss Ann walking off with his friend, and having a shrewd suspicion of the subject of their conversation, he

longed for his share of the fun,—he now observed a sarcastic smile on his countenance, which we are sorry to say was no stranger to it, and which raised his curiosity.

When they approached the lady Mr. Trevillyan began,—"Miss Dennison, I have very patiently heard you to the end. I beg your attention to Mr. Fanshaw, who will be so good as to give you the conversation I had the honour of being an unwilling witness to last night, and which I recounted to him as soon as possible."

When she had heard half, she begged to be excused the rest; but she was not allowed to leave them before she was made acquainted with the premeditated fall from the horse, and so many corroborating circumstances crowded to her mind, she had no doubt of its truth,—and being fully convinced that all hope was now over of this connection, and deeply mortified to have so much more known than was necessary of their past

adventures; — she burst into tears, and earnestly requested the friends would have the mercy not to divulge or expose the thoughtless imprudence of her sisters.

She then went to them, and found them upbraiding each other with great acrimony; but the distress they observed in her face, and the appalling news she had to communicate, soon made them forget their animosity to each other.

Miss Dennison read them a severe lecture on their conduct, and threatened to leave them to the consequence of it, unless they consented to quit the boarding house; and as she had great firmness of character, she had obtained a command over the younger ones, which they seldom disputed, when they saw her determined.

Late as it was, she went out to seek a lodging, and as the season was pretty far advanced, she procured a small cottage very cheap; and thither they removed before breakfast next morning. Nor did

she forget to take Eliza to her own bed that night, leaving Mr. Trevillyan undisturbed.

The party regretted the loss of the young ladies, and many conjectures were made; but as our gentlemen kept the secret very honourably, nothing certain was known; and they, as well as most of the inmates of the boarding house, called upon them.

Colonel Desburgh became a daily visitor.

Our friends had now only one object to attend to, and Mr. Fanshaw observing how much of his companion's thoughts were directed that way, began to find his time hang heavy on his hands.

Miss Mordant's health improved daily, —she was soon able to take short walks, and sometimes a drive with her mother in Mr. Trevillyan's curricle, to the beautiful points of view in the neighbourhood; —sometimes, when they kept their own private parlour, that gentleman was allow-

ed to bring books and read them aloud to the ladies: these attentions began from compassion perhaps, but they soon became delightful occupations. Yet he observed that all he did was looked upon as things of course: the mother took an equal share in them with the daughter; and so little did they seek his society, that they appeared to consider it a favour granted to him; however, he was content to visit them upon their own terms: Mr. Fanshaw was often of these parties, and they made no sort of difference between them.

Sir John Neerdowel had never had the honour of an invitation; yet such was the interest and sympathy Miss Mordant excited, that whenever he had an opportunity he paid her the most respectful attentions: these sometimes did not quite please Mrs. Langton; but just at that time she had the discomfort of finding that *Baronet* and *Wealthy* were by no means synonymous terms. Sir John had

let her just enough into his circumstances to convince her that any drafts upon that firm would not be honoured.

There was little play going forward, and she was living too fast for her income. It was true she was a *femme couverte*, and therefore not liable for her debts; yet she knew if she played that game in one place, the fame of it would travel as fast as she could do: besides, if she irritated Colonel Langton, she was aware he could appropriate her dower; so she felt it necessary to seek some other source of supply, and she soon made up her mind what that should be; — she slighted the Baronet, and laid close siege to Mr. Fanshaw. Her bait seemed to take, for having nothing to engage him at this period, he was thankful for the overture; but experienced and callous as he thought himself, he did not calculate on the fascination in store for him.

Nothing was now so gay as the boarding house, and as Mrs. Langton had made a numerous acquaintance in

the town, parties of pleasure were formed for each day, either by land or water. These were all conducted upon a scale of expense, such as astonished the inhabitants of the place. At last the lady proposed giving a ball, and asked Mr. Fairshaw to join her in the expense. He knew what she meant, and it was fortunate for him that his income was large enough to afford these follies; for had he been ever so distressed, his momentary intoxication was such, that he would not have hesitated to assent.

Invitations were sent out for miles round, — and although the character of the lady was not quite immaculate, many efforts were made to procure admission to this gay party, by those whose rank and respectability ought to have kept them away.

Mrs. and Miss Mordant declined attending it, — but the Miss Dennisons were invited, and gladly accepted it.

At last the numbers were so great, that

it was feared no room in the boarding house would contain them, and the public assembly-room was engaged. People were sent for from town to decorate it;—artificial flowers in rich festoons, coloured lamps, and all the *et ceteras* of a fairy entertainment, and something more too.

It was thought that those who came from far would have no objection to a sandwich, and that a supper must be provided.

When Mr. Trevillyan heard all this he went to his friend, and took the liberty of remonstrating with him upon the folly of it, and was vexed to find him too far gone for his admonition to have any weight.

The evening arrived, and every one was enchanted at the splendour of the scene.

Mrs. Langton was most richly and elegantly dressed, and drew all the eyes to herself, until the entrance of the three Graces, attired as nearly in character as

fashion warranted. They attracted general admiration, and were certainly the belles of the night, which Mrs. Langton observing, she determined to decrease their pleasure in the proportion that they had dared to eclipse her. Mr. Fanshaw with great delicacy left her to the Baronet, and went up to Sophia Dennison, to engage her hand for the first two dances; she assented, when Mrs. Langton flew across the room, leaving Sir John behind, and in the most playful manner said, "Come, come, Mr. Fanshaw, I am waiting for you to lead off the dance with me."

"I beg your pardon," said he, "I thought you were engaged, and I have asked Miss Sophy. — Had I known the honour was intended for me —"

"No time for fine speeches now," said she, "Sophy will excuse you:" and passing her hand under his arm, she almost dragged him away.

Poor Sophy felt the delicacy of the one,

and the jealousy of the other; and had fortune destined her to him from this moment, she *might* have made a valuable member of society. Alas! such was not to be.

In an evil hour Sir John Neerdowel, provoked at being so cavalierly turned adrift by her who had hitherto been so devoted to him, determined to revenge himself upon her, by flirting with another; he asked Sophy to dance, — he exerted himself to please her, and was all life and animation.

In a worse hour Eliza ran to her, during a cessation of the figure, and whispered in her ear, "My life for it, the Baronet and Madam Langton have had a blow-up; —make the best of your time, and you may carry him off, and have ample revenge upon all. — I hate the woman for her conduct to us this evening."

Sophy had observed the coldness of manner between her partner and Mrs. Langton, and was not backward to pro-

fit by the hint, — and they seemed mutually delighted with each other, — he never quitted her during the evening; — and although she was asked to dance by many officers, yet she preferred talking to him. He attended her at supper, and even saw her home.

CHAP. V.

I have but lean luck in this match,
Comedy of Errors.
A man may weep upon his wedding day.
Henry VIII.

An Elopement and Marriage.

Ann and Eliza had enjoyed themselves in spite of Mrs. Langton's wishes, — indeed she had so much to do in attending to her higher guests, that she took little notice of them.

The next morning Sir John was the first of the many who called at the cottage. Sophia made an appointment to walk with him, and invited him to take tea there in the evening.

The next morning she rode one of his horses, with no other attendant, and passed most of the evening in walking

alone with him. This went on for a week. Miss Dennison cautioned and remonstrated, and at last was exceedingly incensed at her impropriety.

The morning following Sir John was not seen at the breakfast-table, and the servants said he was gone, — had set off in a post chaise the preceding night, — and that his groom and horses had set out at day-light.

Many were the conjectures, — many looks of enquiry were passed between the company; — all had their suspicions, but none seemed desirous to be the first to vent them: they were all, however, eager for their neighbour to begin. Mrs. Langton felt the most uneasy; for although she had slighted the Baronet for the present, she had no sort of wish to give him up entirely, for she looked upon him as a *corps de reserve*; and though not rich himself, she thought they might mutually assist each other in becoming so. At last she said, "I

wonder if Sophy Dennison was privy to his departure?"

"No doubt she was," said another.

"I wonder where she is!" exclaimed a third; and by degrees they proceeded to consider it an even chance if she were not with him.

Colonel Desburgh felt very uneasy, for Sophia was a violent favourite of his; and he had an ill opinion of Sir John, from having witnessed some incorrectness of conduct at the billiard table.

Miss Dennison happened to awake by the first dawn of day; and finding herself restless, she rose, and went into their sitting room for the third volume of the last new novel. She was surprised to see upon the table a sealed letter addressed to herself, in Sophia's hand-writing. She opened it in extreme trepidation, and a foreboding of she could not tell what. — It informed her that Sir John Neerdowel had pleaded his cause so successfully, that she had been

persuaded to accompany him to Bath, where the ceremony would take place as soon as possible, her dear Sir John having very particular reasons why he did not wish it celebrated at Southampton:—that her only reason for keeping the affair from her sisters was, that there appeared a fatality to attend upon any scheme they had jointly taken in hand. She hoped to see them soon at Bath; and having made so good a market for herself, she would take care to settle them. She added, that they were to direct to Lady Neerdowel, Sidney-place, Bath.

A thunderbolt could not have been more dreadful to Miss Dennison. She had no doubt but that Sophy had deceived herself: she was of age, and there could be no necessity for elopement, if Sir John was an honourable man. She saw her ruin and her own implication at the same view; but, prompt in taking her measures, and quick in executing them,

she awoke Eliza — told her the distress that had befallen them, and that she herself would set off instantly after them. She gave her directions what answer she should give to any visitors; and told her she should either see or hear from her in the course of the day. She then went to the inn and took a chaise to Salisbury: the roads were in fine order, and she arrived there just as the fugitives were sitting down to breakfast — not in the least caring for, or expecting pursuit.

Miss Dennison soon saw there was only one method to take. Instead, therefore, of passionately upbraiding them, she treated them with great leniency; but firmly insisted that they should not stir from that place until they were married; or, if that could not be done so speedily, he should enter into a bond to that effect: and that Sophia should return with her, until the licence and other arrangements were made.

Sir John, who never gave himself the

trouble to consider what he was about, solemnly protested he had never promised, or even thought of marrying; — that his circumstances were such, that it would be involving both of them in inevitable ruin; — that it was a frolic which suited their mutual inclinations; but that now he saw the impropriety of their conduct so forcibly, that he could no longer be so selfish as to ask Sophy to accompany him farther; and that, if they returned immediately, nobody would guess any thing of the matter.

Sophia's astonishment and rage had alone prevented her interrupting him; but when he had finished, she stormed and raved like a perfect fury. She told him of all his professions — all his declarations of inviolable attachment; and "could any man of honour dare to make these protestations to her with dishonourable views?"

"Mere words of course, child," said the undaunted Baronet.

This increased her passion. She swore she'd sue him for half his fortune: — he dared her.

Miss Dennison, judging that all this impeded rather than accelerated any adjustment of this bad business; and knowing that it was necessary they should make their appearance in Southampton as soon as possible, in order to lull suspicion, at last, proposed that Sir John should proceed alone to town — from whence he should write to Mrs. Langton and others, making his own excuses for his sudden departure; but that he should know nothing of them.

They parted with execrations on the part of the lady, and apathy on that of the gentleman — who, truth to say, had neither heart nor feeling for any one, and who would sacrifice his best friend for the gratification of the moment.

In the mean time Eliza, who had been left at home to receive those visitors whom curiosity might lead to the cot-

tage, happened to have a levee that morning. She welcomed them all with such perfect composure and self-possession, that when she said her sisters were bathing or walking, few doubted the fact. It is true, their visits were unusually long; but still, though the ladies were bathing or walking a long while, yet it was thought impossible, that one so young could so artfully evade the questions which were put to her.

Sir John's departure was spoken of. She expressed no surprise or change of countenance; but said she had heard him say he had just received letters, which would oblige him to go to town immediately.

Colonel Desburgh was not the least interested of her visitors. He had noticed the flirtation between Sir John and his *protegée*, and heard the suspicions thrown out against her. He felt extremely anxious, and had been the

earliest guest at the cottage; but his motives were not those of idle curiosity, — his heart was purely benevolent. — These young ladies were the daughters of a soldier, and without protection, — and as such he felt they had a claim upon every honourable mind, and more particularly upon his — as an old veteran.

He had passed some part of each day at the cottage, and had always retired with increased regard for them: but this morning he had prolonged his stay as long as decency would permit, in the hope of seeing the ladies return; then went home, — looked over one newspaper after another, till he found he knew not what he was reading; — he walked about the town, — went to the billiard table, where he heard many insinuations, many jokes respecting the Baronet and "a lady." This made him more restless than before — he took his hat and gold-headed cane, and set off again; and great was his satisfaction at meeting Ann and

Sophy sauntering quietly along the town, as if tired with a long walk.

They had not had the most amicable ride in the world.—Miss Dennison bitterly reproached her incorrigible sister, who, however, felt only for herself, and her own disappointment of fortune, rank, and title. They alighted before they reached the town, and walked leisurely into it, exerting themselves to appear as usual.

The Colonel was the least suspicious of all human beings:—perfect in rectitude himself, he never suspected others—and least of all did he expect duplicity in the orphan daughters of a soldier.—His countenance brightened at the sight of them, and he mentally deprecated the malice and wickedness of the age, where people were ready to slander so much innocence. He walked to the cottage with them in great good humour, and then went home to publish the account of their meeting, and

to quiet the ungenerous surmises which were afloat: but he had the mortification of finding his report received with an incredulous smile, or a very dubious assent: this only served to raise his enthusiasm into a kind of knight-errantry. — He visited the cottage in the evening, and finding Miss Dennison at home and alone, he candidly told her that the impropriety of Sophy's flirtation with Sir John had laid her open to the scandal of the place, — that he would not hurt her feelings by the evil reports which were in circulation; but, as he himself was well aware they were utterly groundless, he came to say, that if Sophy chose to accept his name and protection, he was willing to make her his wife. — At the same time he begged her to state, that at his time of life his habits were formed, and that if she accepted him, she must conform to them.

Nothing could possibly come more opportune. Miss Dennison heard him

with undissembled complacency, and said much more than was true of her sister's suavity of temper. Had she confined herself to the real matter of fact, she had better have been silent in this particular, for she knew Sophy was a perfect fury; — however, she recommended her so strongly to our old Veteran, that upon his departure he almost fancied himself in love.

Miss Dennison immediately went to her sister, and with great glee acquainted her with the Colonel's offer: at first, it was quite impossible to make her listen to such a preposterous proposal, — she declared, let the result be what it would, she never would consent to it. — Miss Dennison, however, let her run on till she had said all she chose, and then brought forth such very powerful arguments; — she represented her situation as so critical, and set the consequences of her conduct in so perilous and desperate a light, that poor Sophy found this was

no time to demur, and she gave her reluctant consent with a despair almost bordering upon phrenzy.

When, however, she was left to herself for the night, she began to consider it by no means so bad a match as at first she thought it.— The Colonel was known to be extremely rich, and he would no doubt be so fond and so proud of his handsome young wife, as to indulge her in every whim his fortune could gratify — and she determined these should not be few.— Fine parties, fine dresses, fine equipages, flitted before her imagination; and as, in the natural course of events, he could not live long, in a very few years she would be left a rich widow. Many were the visions of pleasure of our poor Sophy, we shall see how they were realised.

When the Colonel presented himself the next morning, to receive the thankful acquiescence which he had no doubt was awaiting him, his intended be-

haved more to his satisfaction than he did to hers; — she expected a fond old fool, — but she found a rational old man, who felt that *he* was conferring the obligation, not receiving it. And in his subsequent visits, there was much less of indulgent benevolence than before his proposal.

Miss Dennison remarked this, but she knew that he was right, and that severity was the only method to take with Sophia. — She was, however, astonished at the docility of her sister, who was now so enchanted with the airy castles she had built upon the Colonel's fortune, that she was even fearful of offending him. — Ann thought this could not last long, and dreading any delay, which might do away what was so decidedly advantageous, seconded his wish for an early union; and as the elect made no sort of opposition, the marriage was settled to take place in the next month, and that strict secrecy should be observed.

But profound as they supposed the secret, our friend, John Harding, found means, with the assistance of the chamber-maid, to fathom it. — Scraps of paper were continually found in his room, upon which were written items of supposed expenses of house-keeping, &c. &c., some of which he showed to his master, and which were highly amusing. One ran thus: —

	£
"Wife's dress, with a yearly present of one of my poor mother's brocaded silk gowns, - - - -	20
Her eating, 40; mine, 40, - - -	80
Two servants, shan't want 'em when we travel, - - - -	40
Lodging and attendants, fire, &c. -	100
Horse and gig, with taxes, - -	70
Travelling expenses with the above conveyance, - - - - -	20
	330

Probable expenses of a nursery,—put down horse and gig, and no travelling, — which will save that."

With this and many similar ones, our heroes were much entertained; — they

were diverted too with the look of business and importance of our gallant lover.

The happy anticipations on both sides, however, had nearly been frustrated by Sophia asking one evening if he had bespoken the carriage, — he thought she meant the post-chaise from the inn, and answered it was "time enough to do that;" but when he learnt that it was of his own carriage she spoke, he said there were two seats in his whisky, and that he did not mean to keep any other; — he said it too in a severe tone, which made Miss Dennison tremble, — and she observed "*that* was quite enough:" — but Sophy mentally determined that when once the noose was fixed, she would teach him other things.

The portentous day at last arrived, and the indefatigable John Harding contrived to get notice of it, and apprised his master, who having prepared his friend Fanshaw, they rose early, and

took care to meet him full dressed walking to church.

Miss Dennison had strongly recommended a sedan chair on the occasion, but he wisely remembered that he was about a very expensive business,— that his expenditure would henceforth be doubled, and his savings consequently less; — and he recollected with great complacency, that on the preceding evening, he had generously given Sophia's one thousand pounds, (which was all that was remaining of the fifteen hundred left by her father,) to her sisters, while he had settled two thousand pounds upon his wife, in lieu of it; —that this two thousand, together with his savings from this time, were to be equally divided between his younger children, while his present fortune should devolve entire to his eldest son.

With all these provident calculations floating in his brain, he concluded upon saving chair-hire; and his few grey locks

Having been well powdered, and surmounted by his best triple cocked hat, trimmed after the same fashion as his travelling one — his newest coat, ornamented *en militaire* with much gold lace, broad lace ruffles, and flapped waistcoat, — his knees adorned with brilliant buckles of great value, as were those of his shoes, a splendid breast pin, and many fine rings on his long shrivelled fingers, see our bridegroom sally forth down the street to church.

Our friends accosted him on his road, admired his dress, and asked as many questions as they dared: but the Colonel was not a man with whom any one would choose to take a liberty.—However grotesque his appearance, however parsimonious his habits,—his strict integrity, which appeared in the most trifling transactions, — his general information, and his gentlemanly manners, secured him the respect of all who knew him. — Finding his errand suspected, he at once

acknowledged it, and even asked the gentlemen to accompany him to church. And had it not been that they feared the bride would consider their presence an intrusion, if not an insult, considering all circumstances, they would gladly have done so. But they drew from the Colonel that they were to return from the church to breakfast at the cottage, and then set off for Bath.

The gentlemen returned home, — calculated the time, — ordered their horses, and then rode out on the Salisbury road, leaving their servants behind. After they had gone about five miles, they faced about, and slowly returned homewards. They were fearful they had missed the bridal pair, when they were within two miles of home without seeing them: but just then Mr. Fanshaw perceived the whisky drawn up by the side of the road, and an ostler attending it;—he quickly rode up to him, and learnt that he had orders to wait there till a chaise came up. Many were the

conjectures of the friends, but they guessed nothing like the truth, — so they determined to keep out of sight and watch.

The ceremony took place, and the breakfast went off well; and when Mrs. Desburgh took leave of her sisters, she whispered, — "It is but for life, thank God." — She then hastened into the chaise, and it drove off.

Just before they came to the second mile-stone, and within ken of our *perdus* heroes, the carriage drove up to the whisky, and the Colonel told his wife they were to proceed on their journey in that; — that he had indulged her with a chaise thus far, because he feared she might not like the crowd which her getting into it from the church might attract.

The bride was thunderstruck,—she began with great indignation to declare, that she would not move from the seat she was in, and therefore they may as well pay for going on, as standing there.

The Colonel alighted, and deaf to all her arguments offered his hand to assist her out. — She used threats, remonstrances, and even tears;—alas! to no purpose, she had just sworn to obey, and soon found herself called upon to perform it.

With great dismay, and in violent ill-humour, she at last got out of the chaise, and was seated in the hated whisky: — the Colonel paid the boy, and dismissed him and the chaise, and then mounted himself by the side of his dissatisfied rib.

The old charger had just got into his usual amble, when our friends met them: — the bride hastily drew down her veil, hoping, perhaps, to escape observation; — not so the Colonel, he had gained his point, and shown himself master; and with self-approbation strongly marked in his weather-beaten countenance, he stopped his charger, and with great cordiality accepted their congratulations. — Possibly he would have been still more

elated, had he known they had witnessed his triumph,—for nothing would have given him more discomfort, than to be called or thought a doting old fool.

When, however, they offered the usual compliments to the bride, she lost all command of herself,—she burst into a passion of tears, and in an imperious tone, ordered her husband to "drive on."

Now, whether it was that he had been long used to military discipline, and to give rather than receive commands from his subordinates,—or whether his recent victory hardened him to try another, we know not,—truth obliges us to state, he turned a deaf ear to the voice of his charmer. Not only did he disregard the imperative command, but with most provoking indifference, began to talk politics, and asked the news of the morning papers.

Sophy was in agony, and no longer able to restrain herself; her temper completely

got the better of her prudence; and our gentlemen would no doubt have improved by a matrimonial squabble of no very gentle kind, if their compassion for her had not conquered their curiosity.—They took leave, after receiving a very warm invitation to renew their acquaintance whenever they had the opportunity.

The *happy* pair then proceeded slowly on their road, amusing themselves by saying the softest, kindest things imaginable. The bride lamented she had been such a fool as to listen to the advice of her sisters, and throw herself away. The Colonel was quite astonished at the ill temper of his rib; but he regarded her as a fine young colt, whom he must break in, and doubted not his own skill in this exercise. He told her, very coolly, that it was rather late to repent; but that he was very apprehensive he had the worst of the bargain: however, since she was his wife, he was determined to let her know, that as long as she con-

formed to his will he would treat her well; but that he was not a doting fool.—While this fond dialogue was passing, she was too much occupied to observe the attention they drew.

If the reader can picture to himself—the gentleman, such as we have endeavoured to pourtray him—his tall, lank figure, sitting very upright in his whisky, driving without gloves,—for that would have been an extravagance far on the outside of his ideas;—his sparkling rings, reflecting the mid-day sun:—contrasted with an elegantly dressed, handsome young woman of three-and-twenty, in bridal white,—a chip hat, with beautiful feathers, and white gloves, (for never had the whisky entered her calculation,)—he will not wonder that the inhabitants of every cottage turned out, with one accord, to look at them.

It happened, that when the chaise which took this hopeful couple two miles on the road returned to the inn at South-

ampton, there was a party just ordering one in haste; and as the horses had done little work, the postillion was desired to take up this fare, and set off again towards Salisbury. The fellow, who thought his self-appreciated merits had been very ill requited by the bridegroom, resolved to have some fun, if he could get no money. He drove fast; and as the Colonel's charger partook of none of his new mistress's impatience, he soon overtook them. The lad slackened his horse as he passed the whisky, looked back, and gave them a broad grin — then whipped his horses, and went on again.

This action recalled the hero of our present tale from an exordium he was giving to his subdued help-mate. The blood which swelled his veins in stately pride on his meagre hands, all rushed to his face, as he vowed he'd make "that impudent scoundrel know whom he grinned at." But this same grin had a far different effect upon his companion; for,

what was her consternation, at recollecting in him the identical post-boy who had driven Sir John and herself some weeks ago! She was assured, too, that the fellow remembered her. — Fear soon accomplished that which no efforts of her lord could produce. She became patient, and even obliging; excused the postillion, and begged he would not condescend to notice any thing so much beneath him. She even talked courteously; and, in the far greater evil she dreaded, she lost the irritation of seeing herself followed into Salisbury by a race of ragged boys and girls, who were attracted by the novelty of the sight.

When, however, they entered the town, and saw the streets literally lined with people, as if waiting for some uncommon spectacle, she was exceedingly distressed. She easily guessed the truth: — the malicious post-boy had hastened on, and industriously awoke country curiosity, by his description of the pair

who were approaching. The news spread like wild-fire, and the ringers ran to enquire if it was likely they would be paid for giving them a peal; but learning how scantily the postillion had been remunerated, they forebore paying them this compliment.

Colonel Desburgh had been used, from his very singular appearance, to attract general observation; and although the present was rather more than usual, he paid no attention to it, and perhaps was quite unconscious of it.

When they stopped before the inn, there was a regiment of waiters, ostlers, and servants, waiting; and the chaise-driver (a provoking grin still upon his face) half hid behind a group of others. And at the principal room, two or three officers were seen lounging out of each window.

Sophia's first impulse was to hasten in, and hide herself; but prudence whispered her not to leave the Colonel in such

company —for nothing had escaped her eye. She sat patiently while he slowly alighted, then handed him the few things they had in the whisky, and accepted his hand to dismount. She stood with him, arm in arm, while he gave directions to the ostler, who pretended to be wiping his greasy face, to hide his ill-concealed laugh. They then went into the house; and as the days were now getting short, and the clock striking four, the Colonel said he should remain where he was till the next morning. To this, however, our heroine strongly objected; but was once more destined to feel that she was only second in command — a mere aid-de-camp.

It was not her cue to irritate him just now; and she tried to amuse him, until she had the satisfaction of seeing the Southampton postillion set off on his return home.

The Colonel seemed much pleased with the alteration in his fair companion;

and laying it all to the account of his discipline and generalship, he became exceedingly placid and cheerful.

He had seen much of the world—witnessed many of its diversities,—not, indeed, in his own person, for he had been singularly fortunate; but his benevolent heart felt for the distress of every brother officer. He had great pleasure in speaking of scenes that were past;—though, to his praise be it spoken, whenever he was the hero of his own tale, he totally forgot many deeds of benevolence,—many fine traits of character, by which others knew and remembered him. Many officers' widows had reason to bless his disinterested kindness; for, much as he loved money and its accumulation, he never hesitated giving up a just demand of his own, if it militated against those who needed it:—and even now, he was providing for many sons of those friends he had seen fall in battle.

A woman who had soul enough to

enter into his character, would have adored such a man.

It will be recollected, that no sum was dedicated to charity in the scale of expenses with which we presented our readers: — that was from a separate stock. And it might well be said of him, that his left hand knew not what his right hand gave: — as soon as it was given it was forgotten blotted out of his memory for ever. To counterbalance so much excellence, he had eccentricities without number.

CHAP. VI.

How much a man is a fool, when he dedicates his behaviour to love!

Much Ado about Nothing.

Stole away.

SOPHIA would have passed a very comfortable evening, if her mind had been easy; but her dread of exposure kept her in constant alarm. She fearfully looked in every face, to find out if she was known; and she had constant amusement in this way, for every servant in the house seemed to find some necessity of entering their apartment. However, all went on well; and she congratulated herself upon her escape, as she was mounting the whisky the following morning, when a woman came out from the inn, and with a courtsey and a sim-

per, said, "I believe, ma'am, you are the lady ——"

"What do you want?" said the Colonel; "I'm sure I paid you."

"Stay, stay, my good woman," said Sophy, as she hastily jumped down, "and I'll speak to you."

When they were a little apart, "I believe, ma'am," again began the woman, "you are the lady that came here with that handsome gentleman some weeks ago. To be sure, ma'am, there's some difference, — but that's nothing. —— I beg your pardon, ma'am," observing Sophy's impatience; — "that *young* gentleman left a ring here upon his basin stand. — I thought, ma'am, he was going to give you a ring; but then one can't tell these things. Now, ma'am, I've kept this ring in my pocket ever since; for, thinks I to myself, I shall surely see this couple together again, though they are so cruelly parted now: — true hearts, says I, are not so easily separated."

"My good woman," said the agitated Sophia, "I know nothing at all of the ring; — there's half-a-crown for you," and away she ran to the whisky, where the Colonel was already seated, and impatiently waiting for her.

The woman had got all she wanted; — she was in possession of a secret, and she determined to make her advantage of it.

Sophy dreaded some other attack, and felt greatly relieved as they left the town. She made some excuse for the woman to the Colonel, and became very good-humoured. They reached Bath without accident, and took up their quarters at the Fleece Inn.

The following morning they sallied forth in quest of lodgings, — and great was the bride's dismay when she found that Westgate Buildings, or that neighbourhood, must be the scene of their connubial felicity, — nothing could be more horrible. To prevent this, she tried her

most winning entreaties; — he gave her the choice of that or King's-mead Terrace, and this was all she could obtain. — Of two such situations she chose the former; — but again tried all her powers of persuasion, all her arguments. She should be cut off from every desirable acquaintance! — who would visit her in such a place? — and how could she give out her cards? — "Mrs. Desburgh at home, Westgate Buildings:" — the thing was impossible.

Alas! these things entered not into the Colonel's plans. An "At home" was High Dutch to him; and he very coolly told his fair companion, "That a small circle of friends, who would come in and talk over the politics of the day, — play a rubber of sixpenny whist, — take a bit of bread and cheese, and a little porter, was worth all the 'At homes' in the universe."

"Sir," said his offended bride, with great indignation, "I know nothing of

politics, — I hate sixpenny whist, and I never take cheese or porter."

"Never mind, my dear," said her unmoved spouse; "you may amuse yourself with your needle the while; — and now I think of it, I want shirts; — eat butter instead of cheese, — and take water if you prefer it to porter."

Was ever any thing so provoking! — yet she had now (during three days of her wedded life) had experience enough to know that submission was all she had for it, — and they were finally settled in Westgate Buildings, to the utter subversion of all her high-flown schemes. — And in this happy temper and abode we will leave them to the sympathy of her sisters, who soon followed her, and took up their abode as near as fashion allowed to her.

The sisters would have left Southampton immediately after the elopement, but for the Colonel's offer.

At that place things proceeded

nearly in the same track we left them. — Miss Mordant gained daily upon the affections of Mr. Trevillyan, — and he determined to consult the mother upon the subject; for though the young lady appeared pleased with his attentions, yet he observed her just as thankful to Mr. Fanshaw, or to any one else, for any kindnesses she received; — he was therefore by no means confident of success.

Mrs. Mordant had marked his growing partiality with great pleasure. Her daughter had a very small inheritance, — was fatherless, — and it was of great importance to settle her so respectably. — Mr. Trevillyan was a gentleman of fortune, — a man of sense and literature, — and every way calculated to make her daughter happy; — yet she feared her disappointment was too fresh in her mind to allow of her forming another attachment. She neither hid her satisfaction of his offer, or her fears of its reception from him; but finding him desirous of an

immediate application, she went to her daughter, and by degrees imparted it to her. — She soon, however, repented her temerity: — the recollection of past happiness, — of reasonable anticipations, — all, all, blighted in a single hour! — rushed to her mind with such force, that her unhappy daughter besought her to speak of it no more, — and the miserable and feverish night she passed seconded her entreaties.

Mrs. Mordant communicated all this to Mr. Trevillyan, who, making allowances for wounded affections, and perhaps loving her the better for the obstacle she started, and for the constancy of affection she evinced, resolved to persevere.

Meanwhile his friend Mr. Fanshaw was devoting himself, with rather more ardour than he thought necessary, to Mrs. Langton; and as the Mordants were to leave Southampton next week, he determined to return home the

day after their departure, and, if possible, to take him with him; this, however, he found must be managed with delicacy: he hinted his wish, but Mr. Fanshaw answered he was engaged to go to Bath. It was necessary, therefore, to take other methods to detach him.

The eve of Mrs. Mordant's departure arrived. — Miss Mordant had been somewhat reserved and distant to her admirer since his declaration; but this day she seemed to have no intention of shunning him: he profited of an opportunity, and in the warmest terms of attachment urged his suit. She listened to him with great emotion, and when he paused, she, without the slightest reserve, disclosed to him the sorrowful history of times past; and she did it with such touching sensibility, that his tears soon fell as fast as her own. She was surprised at such unexpected sympathy; — it found a ready way to her heart, and was more grateful to her, than all the protestations in the world.

It might almost be said of them, "*He* loved her for the *sorrows* she had passed, and she *liked* him that he did pity them." She expressed her sense of his kindness and attention, which she should never forget; — that when at home she should frequently regret the loss of his society; — and that whenever he should visit the metropolis, she should be unfeignedly glad to see him as a friend; but she assured him, her affections had been too strongly, and too deeply engaged, ever to form another attachment, — but her friendship would always be his.

A lover, they say, hopes where all others would despair; — and although he had not gained all he wished, yet more had been accorded than he dared to hope — permission, and, indeed, what he construed into an invitation to visit her in town.

The parting on both sides was kind and affectionate; and when he had watched their carriage out of sight, he set

about stealing away his friend from the enchantress. It was requisite to take prompt measures :— he told Mr. Fanshaw that he had just received a letter upon business of importance, on which he much wanted his advice; that some papers were necessary to the elucidation of the affair, which no one but himself could procure; and that he wished he would accompany him home for a few days immediately: — and having gained his promise, he resolved to give him no time to retract it: — he ordered his curricle,—gave John Harding private directions to pay all scores, both on his own and Mr. Fanshaw's account, — to desire his servant to follow, and then to let his friend know that he waited for him.

Mr. Fanshaw was surprised; he thought he could not be wanted till next day; and he said he must take leave of Mrs. Langton.

That lady, however, had been watched to the milliner's, and her visits there

were never of very short duration; therefore no objection was made to his seeking her where it was known she could not be found; but as they had some miles to travel, Mr. Trevillyan begged he would not be long.

It was not with great good-humour that Mr. Fanshaw seated himself in the curricle. He had left a message for Mrs. Langton, saying, that he should certainly return at the end of the week; and he was amusing himself with the flattering idea, of how deeply she would regret his absence.

The ride was so extremely beautiful, and the autumnal evening so brilliant, that he soon regained his cheerfulness; and by the time he arrived at Eldrington Hall, he felt quite satisfied with himself and his companion.

It was too dark that night to see the beauties of the place, or of the adjacent scenery; but the next day they rode over it, and the host was quite delight-

ed by the admiration expressed by his guest; they called at several neighbours, and passed the rest of it quietly at home, looking over fine books and prints, and some very valuable manuscripts, of which he had a great collection.

The next morning, however, Mr. Fanshaw began to think it was time to speak of the "important business" they came upon, and which his friend appeared to have forgotten. "I can't help suspecting," said he, after breakfast, "that it was merely a hoax to bring me here to admire your sweet place,—pray tell me what was your motive?"

"Simply," replied Mr. Trevillyan, "to detach you from the snares of that enchantress, with whom you were playing the —— fool, I was going to say."

"I thank you for your well-meant intentions," answered Mr. Fanshaw, drily; "but, in the first place, you judge erroneously of me, if you think I am to be taken in, even by Mrs. Langton;—

and, in the next, you speak of her as she does not deserve,—she is an amiable and much injured woman;—she has been placed in very trying circumstances, and I believe, in her situation, few would have acted so well: and as to any connection between her and Sir John, which we used to suspect, I am convinced there was nothing in it more than a little innocent flirtation."

"Come, come, my friend," said Mr. Trevillyan, "answer me one question, were you not engaged to accompany her to Bath for the winter?"

"Suppose I am," returned Mr. Fanshaw, with some warmth, "what then! I can't marry her, and can leave her when I find her unworthy my attention."

"And can you think such a connection can add to your respectability or her's?—Besides, this woman has no real regard for you, or for any body else, and therefore can take a deliberate aim at her victims, and ——"

"I am surprised, sir, to hear you speak thus of Mrs. Langton," said Mr. Fanshaw, indignantly; "I thought you were so engrossed, first by Miss E. Dennison, and afterwards by Miss Mordant, that you had no time so nicely to scan the merits of another; but possibly you meant to try if a third ——"

"Fanshaw," interrupted Mr. Trevillyan, "you grow warm: however, if I do not convince you of your error, I am content to bear your most injurious suspicions." He then rang the bell, and when John Harding appeared, he desired him to bring the letter he found at Southampton. John's countenance beamed with pleasure as he delivered a dirtied letter into his master's hand:—he retired, and Mr. Trevillyan then said, "You have already remarked the familiarity subsisting between John and me, —he was my companion while a child, and we have insensibly grown up on the same terms; yet he never for a mo-

ment forgets himself: — he is always obedient, always respectful; and I confess that, on some occasions, I have been indebted to his shrewdness, when my own penetration was dormant. It was he that discovered, (by what means I did not enquire,) that Sophia Dennison went off with Sir John Neerdowel, and that it was owing to the self-possession and management of her sister that she was brought home, and paraded the streets of Southampton, soon enough to quash the surmises which were afloat. It was to him we owed that delicious matrimonial scene, which I would not have lost for the universe; — and now comes your obligation to him: — he came to me a few nights prior to our departure, full fraught with indignation, and told me he thought it pity such a gentleman as you should be duped by such a creature (his own expressions); but then, he said, she had no doubt more art than all her sex put together. — He then told me of a regu-

lar scheme now on the carpet to pigeon you, and Sir John was to be her accomplice, and to divide the spoils : — with this he produced this letter, which he found and read. I rather suspect the *femme de chambre* found and read it first, for I fancy there is a strong flirtation in that quarter. I confess my curiosity was raised, and I was about to open the paper ; but as John knew and had informed me of its contents, I determined you should read it before I did, so I begged him to keep it safely until I asked him for it. I was then desirous of finding you, but luckily you were out with Mrs. Langton, which gave me time to consider and determine upon some expedient of serving you. I had Mrs. Langton watched to the milliner's, when I laid hands upon you."

Some of our readers may suppose Mr. Fanshaw too scrupulous a man of honour to read a letter so found, particularly when he knew himself to be the subject

of it;—perhaps he ought to have inclosed it under a blank cover to Mrs. Langton unread,—or possibly to Sir John Neerdowel with a challenge. Mr. Fanshaw did neither of these. No;—he opened the letter, and if we dared we would say, he did it with as much impatience as could be displayed by any female of the three kingdoms. Happily we are not bound to vindicate the actions of our acquaintance, but merely to recount incidents as they occurred; therefore we say he opened and read the letter, which he found to be written by Sir John Neerdowel, and appeared to be in answer to one received from Mrs. Langton.—Its contents were as follows:

"My dearest and most charming friend, your kind letter was a solace to my wounded spirit.—Had you but trusted me earlier with your views, how many sad hours would you have spared me.—You accuse me of desertion, but you wrong me.—It is true that the gay

Sophia did accompany me to Salisbury, yet upon my honour the scheme was solely and entirely her own, — I had little hand and far less heart in it; — that heart was cruelly mortified by your sudden and apparent dereliction, — and perhaps a little revenge for your supposed unkindness gave me more zest for the frolic. Your letter, my own sweet Maria, has fully and delightfully accounted for your conduct. — I thank you warmly for the interest you take in my finances, — they are at present at a very low ebb. — I perfectly agree with you, that separately we can do little, while if we coalesce we may carry all before us. — Yet I fear the person you allude to is too cautious to answer our expectations. — I tried him at play and at billiards, but could make nothing of him: there was always that cold-blooded companion of his in the way; — yet his fortune is very large, and worth some trial. Be it your first effort to separate the friends, for of the Eldring-

ton hero there can be no hope; — cold, stiff, and unbending, he is just fitted for that fragile piece of wax-work he is courting. — I was heartily sorry Eliza lost her prey there. — As for what you hint of a match between Sophy and old Desburgh, the idea is too amusing to hear with composure; — I have laughed at it almost ever since your charming letter arrived. I should like to be present on the occasion. — But to return to business: — let me hear soon that the gentlemen are separated — your penetration and genius will dictate the means; and let me know when you and ——— mean to be at Bath. — Our meeting of course must be quite accidental, — but remember I am not to be made jealous, by your preferring him to me, — you are much too beautiful, too entirely after my own heart, for me to bear with complacency your affection for another. — Adieu, my dearest Maria, may we soon meet at Bath, and do not delay it; —

for however devoted your admirer may be now, I know enough of his character to be well aware that a slight lesson of morality from pretty lips, even perhaps from those of Miss Mordant, might draw him away. You will find no one so constant as your faithful adorer,

J. NEERDOWEL.

"Once more write soon and mention Sophy's progress; if she really marries the old One. I have not yet taken my leave of her. — I owe him a grudge for being more quick-sighted than necessary, when I was playing against Lord Edward. —— What a happy thing Miss Dennison was so much upon the alert in separating us!—she would have been a dreadful clog. Once more, adieu."

Mr. Fanshaw read the letter twice or thrice ere he could believe his own senses; he then looked for his friend, but found himself alone. Mr. Trevillyan had delicacy enough to leave him and his letter

together, and certainly his passions were in a sad ferment.

After walking up and down the room some minutes — which is often of great use in allaying fermentations of this kind, — he sought his host in the plantations, and taking both his hands in his, "My dear Trevillyan," said he, "what an egregious fool must you think me." — He then expressed himself with much thankfulness for his escape: — but he amused himself by abusing his own credulity and blindness; and it was not easily that Mr. Trevillyan reconciled him to himself.

Mr. Fanshaw gave him the letter to read, and he could not help laughing at the figure he cut in it.

"I only wonder you did not show me this before," said the visiter.

"It was my first impulse," returned his friend, "but I acted more wisely in withholding it. Had I shown it you, you would instantly have taken it to

Mrs. Langton, and in a great passion upbraided her with her treachery; — and she would, for she has effrontery enough for any thing, have made you believe that some one else was meant, — or that it was highly complimentary, — or that you could not read."

"Hold, hold, dear Trevillyan, I do confess I have deserved your ridicule, but pray temper it with mercy."

"You shall never, my dear friend, hear of this subject again from me, unless you renew the connection, then indeed I will not spare you."

"Never, never, believe me," said Mr. Fanshaw, "shall you be put to that trial. — But my accounts are not settled for the last fortnight at the Boarding-house, and I rather think they are none of the lightest order, if I may judge from what I have already paid lately; — I must send and settle them."

"Do not trouble yourself about that," answered Mr. Trevillyan, "they are

truly somewhat more than mine; but I took the liberty of desiring John Harding to settle them, and all those put down to the joint account of you and the lady, well knowing that you must pay for all. John has the accounts, which it is time enough to look into; — he is very trusty, and I am sure will not mention the business."

"How well you have managed, my good friend, — how shall I ever repay you?"

"By keeping me company for a week or two while I superintend some plantations and improvements I am about, and I will then attend you to town; for I do confess my thoughts have followed Miss Mordant, and I cannot help flattering myself I may win her."

They were now joined by some visiters who engaged them for the day; and in hunting, shooting, and paying and receiving visits, our heroes continued to pass a very pleasant fortnight: at the end of

which, as they were sitting over their wine one day, and talking over past scenes, — Mr. Fanshaw said, " If you would not laugh at me, I do confess I should greatly like to learn how they were going on at Southampton, and if another gudgeon has been found in my place."

" I have as much curiosity as you on the subject," said Mr. Trevillyan, " how can we contrive it?"

After a great deal of consultation, it was determined to send John Harding on a journey of discovery; — they called him in, — and having given him all necessary directions, and many cautions, he was invested with the honour of the commission, which was particularly agreeable to him, as it gave him an opportunity of wooing his fair *femme de chambre.*

CHAP. VII.

We must be gentle now we are gentlemen,
Winter's Tale.

Scenes at Southampton. — A Lesson of Gentility.

The gentlemen could not possibly have found a more discreet observer, or more active agent than John Harding; and he was peculiarly well qualified for the undertaking, from the strong flirtation subsisting between him and the housemaid, — whom, however, he determined to remove from the Boarding-house before he left Southampton, and procure her a more genteel place, until he could engage his master so much in his interest as to allow him to marry without vacating his situation.

John was highly flattered by the com-

pliment of being embodied, as it were, with his master and his friend ; and used great address in making himself master of the following scenes.

Mrs. Langton was greatly surprised, on her return from the milliner's, to receive the message of the fugitives. She thought it appeared ominous ; but as they mentioned only a few days of absence, she determined to amuse herself in the best way she could. She had lost the Dennisons, (the Mordants and she were never at all intimate,) and in their place she found Mr. and Mrs. Barlow, their son, and two daughters, who, with their governess, had been making the tour of the Isle of Wight.

Mr. Barlow had been an eminent woollen-draper, in the city, — had been the maker of his own business, and thriven by his own industry. He was a man of plain good sense, — affecting nothing more than he was well entitled to, and therefore much respected. He mar-

ried the daughter of a *ci-devant* grocer, who, when he left off trade, retired to his country residence at Mile-End. She had had some pains bestowed on her education; but the bad English and coarse manners of those around her, were not calculated to form a gentlewoman, — and she was such only by the weight of her purse.

Mr. Barlow took care of the penny; and the pounds accumulated so fast, that he found himself soon possessed of great wealth. His family grew up; and his wife assured him, that it would be much more agreeable if he left off business: and as he paid implicit obedience to her opinions, at first from the heavy dower she brought, and afterwards from habit, he sold his business for a considerable sum, and commenced gentleman.

The young ladies were finishing their education under a private governess — who, to her shame, could scarcely speak good English herself; and who, because

she dressed smartly, had a great share of pertness — which was mistaken for wit — and bragged of a Parisian education, was looked upon as very clever, and perfectly fitted for her employment, and for the receipt of an enormous salary. She had been in the same capacity in the house of a baronet; but being found wanting in many requisites, she was discharged. Yet the lady was not willing to prevent Miss Fenning's success elsewhere; and happily for both, the very superficial enquiries made by Mrs. Barlow, when she waited upon Lady Burford for that purpose, enabled her to give such answers as appeared very satisfactory to her.

Mrs. Barlow had determined to take Miss Fenning, from the instant that she entered the splendid house of the wealthy Baronet — "It was so genteel a place to have a governess from!"

The young ladies, though neither of them handsome, were well-looking; and

had they been left to themselves, would have been good-humoured, unaffected, well-disposed girls. As it was, however, they copied Miss Fenning's dress, borrowed her wit, and fancied themselves the pink of politeness.

The son had been expensively educated, and at this time was a member of the Oxford university. Every one knows that a young collegian is the veriest puppy in nature; but to make young Barlow superlatively so, he was entered gentleman commoner, and allowed to draw for what money he chose to spend.

His dress was in the extreme of dandyism. The collar of his shirt so stiff as to alarm his ears, and to render it necessary that he should turn his whole body when he answered a question. His hair was literally like that of a person much frightened — every hair stood out by itself, quite independent of its neighbour. His stays were remarkably tight; and the pair of parallel whalebones might

be easily detected through the back of his tight-buttoned coat. Is it necessary to say, that he gave the finishing stroke to his puppyism, by a due contempt for his indulgent parents?

The father, indeed, kept up some little influence over him; but his mother's vulgarity offended his delicate nerves. He gave daily admonitions to her and his sisters, on the score of gentility.

They had been rambling about until they were all pretty well tired of the family group, and longed for other society, — so they determined to go to the Boarding-house for variety. Their carriage was extremely handsome, and young Barlow's phaeton exactly *the thing:* — their equipage and liveries were very conspicuous.

Mrs. Langton, however little given to court the favour of her own sex, studiously ingratiated herself with the fore-horse of this team; and so condescending and amiable did she make herself,

that Mrs. Barlow declared she was the most beautiful and most elegant *voman* she ever had been in company with, except Lady Burford, — and we have no reason to doubt her assertion. Having secured her interest, she next paid her *devoirs* to Mr. Barlow; and as the old gentleman, as in duty bound, pinned his opinion of all people out of trade upon his wife's discernment, he was an easy conquest.

Young Barlow held her up as a pattern for his sisters — who, of course, adopted the general sentiments.

Miss Fenning was the last who yielded to her influence. She did not in her heart, (if she had one,) relish a superior so near; but there was no help for it — so she made up in civility what she wanted in sincerity.

Deeply engaged in winning the money these good people chose to stake, and in laying schemes for the future against the young bale of drugget,

Mrs. Langton totally forgot Mr. Fanshaw; or if she did remember him, perhaps she rather feared than wished his return.

Miss Fenning soon fathomed the views of Mr. Lacket, and strongly recommended the youngest Miss Barlow to his attention. Preliminaries were soon settled between them; and the gentleman commenced a regular but private siege.

Miss Fenning herself tried her powers of attraction upon a rich widower, who had recently become such. She listened with wonderful sympathy and patience to the often-repeated accounts of his grief, and of the merits of his dear deceased wife,—many more in number, perhaps, than ever he gave her credit for during the many years they passed together. She recommended such books to him as she had heard well spoken of by the literary characters she had met at Sir John Burford's table, to which she had been twice or thrice admitted. She

flattered herself she was daily gaining ground with her man of woe, when she heard the provoking creature offer a seat in his carriage to a gentleman for the next morning, when he should proceed to Devonshire, and would take him as far on that road as he chose.

Cheated in this hope, she applied herself to the furtherance of the matrimonial scheme between Mr. Lacket and her pupil with great assiduity; yet so well did she understand her profession, that she never gave the slightest hint that she suspected an attachment between the young people, — she only commended his manners and his person to the young lady. She had, she said, never seen any man more to her taste: — how well he danced! — and he was so clever! — he knew most of the modern languages. And she took care, but always accidentally, to leave them together.

Mrs. Barlow never let an opportunity slip of letting all the company know how

intimately. Miss Fenning was acquainted with persons of quality, of whom that lady talked with great familiarity. Two or three times in the course of the day she would apply to her, "My dear Miss Fenning, what was the name of that countess who admired my carriage so much to you the other day?—dear me! I shall forget my own name soon!" Or, "What was the dress your friend Lady Blossom wore to go to the court in? I remember you mentioned her *tirara* as very fine:—so kind to send for you to see her before she went! But indeed real gentlefolks are always most obliging."

Sometimes she would commit egregious blunders. She once asked out aloud, "Is not Sir John Burford, the Baronet at whose house you were staying, the son of the Duke of Dangerfield?"

Miss Fenning, who had intended all this brag for Mrs. Barlow's private ear,

knowing that she would glibly swallow it when tinctured with a little flattery upon her own equipage and appearance, was not quite sure of avoiding detection in a public company. She therefore suited her answers to circumstances.

The whole party appeared so pleased and so happy with each other, that they mutually regretted they had not met earlier. They therefore remained stationary longer than they intended; and the lateness of the season afforded them many birds of passage from the Isle of Wight, — for many chose to stay some days at Southampton before they went into winter quarters, thinking, perhaps, that every day so spent was stolen from the insipidity of home at this dull season.

Amongst others of this description who crowded to the Boarding-house, was Mr. and Mrs. Watson. He was a hatter at Birmingham, who laboured hard when he left home, and where he was unknown, to sink the trade and the shop in the man

of fashion. His attempts at the elegant and agreeable were truly ludicrous; and he made a point of exerting them, and trying to fasten himself upon the richest or highest people he could meet with: — and though he sometimes met severe and affronting returns for his officious assiduities, nothing could cure him of the propensity.

He married a young lady of good connections, for them and her beauty. She had been a spoilt child till she was twelve years of age, when she was left an orphan without brother or sister; and as none of her friends cared to trouble themselves with an ill brought-up, portionless beauty, she was placed under the care of a maiden lady, who left her pretty much to the bent of her own inclinations.

Mr. Watson often visited at this lady's house; and as he was making money fast, he thought he would indulge himself with a wife, — and that Miss Green

would help him to spend it genteelly, and look well at the head of his table.

It may readily be supposed, the young lady's connections were by no means sorry to dispose of their incumbrance so advantageously, and rid themselves of the responsibility attending it. When, therefore, Mr. Watson did himself the honour of applying to them, (and he took the opportunity of waiting upon them all separately for their sanction,) they received him so courteously, and appeared so well pleased with his proposal, that he flattered himself he was to be upon terms of equality with them for the rest of his life, — and his self-importance rose many degrees. Indeed, these visits seemed to have formed an epoch in his manners, and he determined to be completely the gentleman for the future.

Impatient for the commencement of the reign of gentility, and really liking the young lady, he importuned so ear-

nestly for an early day for his happiness, that she could not, without cruelty, delay it. Of this she was not guilty; and the marriage was celebrated soon afterwards. But, alas! he soon found that his beloved showed her gentility in a very different way to that he had anticipated. She never let an opportunity pass, and, truth to say, he was not slow in affording them, of exposing his vulgarity; and things, which by great good chance might have passed unnoticed, were constantly exposed to observation by her.

Mr. Watson, who had been industriously taking a survey of the coach-houses and stables, and who had been dazzled by the dashing liveries and superb carriages of the Barlows, wisely determined to attach himself to that party.

When the company were all sitting down to dinner, the day after their arrival, and the first of his partaking, he observed Mrs. and Miss Barlow sitting together. He left his wife to manage

for herself, and skipping round to the other side, where the ladies were already seated, near the head of the table, exclaimed, "Really, ladies, it is so terribly John Bullish for two of the sex to sit together, that upon my honour I cannot allow it."

The ladies stared, but did not move; —but our undaunted hero desired a waiter to bring him a chair; —the man answered very respectfully that the "rules of the house were, that the company took their places by seniority, according to the length of their stay, and that the last comers sat at the bottom."

"O barbarous!" cried he, "we'll teach the rules better manners;" —with this he dexterously squeezed himself in, and contrived to squat down upon part of each lady's chair.

Now Mrs. Barlow, being a comely dame, thought she was fully entitled to a chair to herself; but finding Mr. Watson was not to be ousted, she desired

her servant to procure a seat; — and as our hero paid her many compliments and attentions, she willingly accepted his homage as a tribute to her consequence; — and this adds another instance to the numerous ones already known, that impudence is frequently, if not generally, more successful than merit.

His wife, nettled to find herself deserted, and placed near some old gentlewomen, whom she therefore set down in her mind by the respectful epithets of "*old cats*," darted a look of no great complacency on her lord; — "Well, Mr. Watson," said she, "I hope you are comfortable; I am surprised at the lady allowing you to make such a disturbance; — but I'm sure I don't care for being left, I dare say I shall do very well by myself."

During the course of the dinner, observing that Mrs. Barlow had eaten all the jelly that she had on her plate, and fearing that some one else would lay

hands on what remained in the dish, unless immediately appropriated,—he with great coolness took the spoon with which he had himself been eating, and, without asking if she wished more, loaded her plate with nearly the whole that was left. — Now it happened there had only been a small supply of this delicacy at table, and many blank looks were cast upon our hero, for giving it away wholesale; but when Mrs. Barlow sent the jelly away untouched, declaring she should not eat it, some murmurings were heard.

"Well, Mr. Watson," again exclaimed his wife, "what was the use of throwing away all that jelly: this lady," turning to her neighbour, whom, perhaps, she never would otherwise have noticed, "had sent her plate for some, and we have had none at this end of the table, because you chose to waste it."

"My life," answered her husband, "the jelly is untouched; — here, you sir," addressing himself to Mrs. Barlow's

man, who stood always behind her chair, "be so good to carry your mistress's plate, which you took away just now, to that lady at the bottom of the table."

The man smiled, but did not stir, and the smile soon became general, and many persons, perhaps, forgot the loss their palates sustained, in the more satisfactory pleasure of contrasting the correctness of their own manners with the vulgarity of those of Mr. Watson.

In the evening he edged himself in between Mrs. Barlow and Mrs. Langton, at the loo-table; and as the former was the sole directress here, and indeed she might be called the queen bee of this hive, the stake was much higher than ever our hero had played before; but who would not risk something for the benefit of such good company? Fortune favoured him,—he won rather than lost, which increased his already abundant share of confidence.

The next day at dinner he resumed

his former seat; "Sir," said Mrs. Barlow, "I declare you put me in mind of a nephy of ours."

"Indeed, ma'am," said he, quite delighted, "how have I that felicity?"

"Why sir, Ned Barlow is a most *extemporary* young man, I never saw the like of him; if he has a mind to do such or such a thing, or to get something as seems quite out of the reach of other people, he makes no more ado, — but he asks for this, and takes that; while people as it belongs to, stands by and stares all the time, a wondering what he'll do next. Why sir, he was left with nothing but his genius, to provide for himself and his mother, and they've got on wonderfully, and I should not wonder to see him Lord Mayor of London."

So equivocal did our hero feel this compliment, that he did not choose to apply it to himself: — so in order to divert his embarrassment, he applied him-

self to help a tureen of soup, which stood near him.

Wishing to do all things in the most superlatively genteel manner, and observing some dust on the uppermost plate, it was natural to suppose he would have taken his napkin to wipe it,—or the table-cloth, if he had no napkin, or have sent it away entirely: — Mr. Watson's expedient was worth all these put together — He drew out his pocket handkerchief, and very industriously dusted it inside and out. Unfortunate wight! why did he marry such a watchful lynx-eyed damsel? 'Tis true she was talking at the time: —it is true she was telling a lady that she was connected with the ——— family, — but nothing escaped her; — she broke off in the midst of bragging of her descent, and exclaimed loud enough to be heard a mile off, "Good God, Mr. Watson! what are you about?"

Every eye was instantly directed to her husband, as the miserable handker-

chief was taking the farewell turn round the plate.

The poor man looked amazed; — but, supposing he was called to account for the extravagance of soiling a pocket-handkerchief, — for she was a very great economist, — answered, after having put the finishing stroke by blowing off any remaining dust, — "O, nothing, my life! — don't be afraid, it is not a clean one;" and he held the luckless handkerchief up to view, as a corroboration of the assertion.

The roar of laughter which followed. and which defied all controul, and in which even the servants joined, somewhat disconcerted the officious, though perfectly unconscious hero. He looked round to see what was the cause of it, and this look of enquiry only added to the diversion of the company.

It was some minutes before the dinner was thought of, or attended to.

The unfortunate plate, then filled with

soup, was handed round and rejected by all; but few had the delicacy to refuse the others.

Mrs. Langton had observed, however, how freely he played loo, and she did not mean to let him off a second time, as she had done the preceding evening; so she addressed herself to him, with apparent good-nature and politeness, which gave the cue to the rest of the company, who, one and all, admired and imitated her great good-breeding.

Mr. Watson, who even now was totally unconscious of the solecism he had committed, soon recovered his usual effrontery, and all seemed going on well; — but, poor man! his blunders and his troubles were far from ended.

Dinner passed, and the wine was put upon the table, — and he, wishing by his assiduity to do away any thing which might have been wrong, determined to be before-hand with another gentleman, whom he saw ready to help Mrs. Barlow.

He poured from his own decanter so copious a libation into her glass, that it instantly overflowed, and ran in as rich streams as ever Anacreon contemplated, over the new dove-coloured satin of his neighbour; and what that escaped, found a ready way through the joinings of the table, to his own new white trowsers and stockings.

"Lord, sir," exclaimed the discomposed angry lady, as she hastily rose, "did ever any one see the like of that? here's my new dress as cost me twelve pounds, quite spoilt, I declare, with your nasty port wine; but this comes of sitting by them as don't know how to behave; — not that I care for the cost of it, but then 'tis so provoking! — I wonder, sir, as you should intrude yourself into company you've no business to. I might have weared this gown a month before you came, without no accident at all. We was all very comfortable till you came, and knew how to

conduct ourselves. I can tell you, I shant sit by you no more."

Dreadfully mortified in the very quarter where he had flattered himself he should establish himself as an intimate acquaintance, both here and elsewhere, our discomforted hero made every possible concession to the irritated lady, and hastily quitted the room to change his disordered dress. — And the lady recollecting that she should have a reprimand from her son, for so far forgetting herself as to be in a passion on a circumstance which she knew was not warranted by the code of fashion he studied, and appeased by the profound humility of Mr. Watson's concessions, gradually wiped her dress as well as she could, and forgot her displeasure in laughing over the blunders and officiousness of her *ci-devant* attendant.

Our hero found himself more completely drenched than he expected, nor

was he quite comfortable at the evident ridicule he had drawn upon himself. He was soon joined by his amiable wife, who did not find much consolation for her distress, in the conversation which succeeded the mortifying scene. Far from soothing his vexation, she upbraided him in the most violent terms for his vulgarity, —declared that she was in constant dread, for that she never went into company with him without suffering some mortification from his folly; and crowned the whole exordium by saying she was ashamed of him wherever they went.

He patiently listened to her ill temper and abuse, as long as a very good-natured man could do; but thoroughly irritated at last, and finding the storm increase rather than diminish by his gentleness, he replied with some warmth, "Well, madam, since you receive so many mortifications through me when we are in company, please to pack up your rags,

and we'll go home immediately: — I'll take care you shall not have an opportunity of being ashamed soon again."

This alternative, however, had by no means entered into her calculation, and it had an instantaneous effect in calming her irritation. — She had promised herself a great many dances; — for they generally danced every night, and it was her favourite amusement, — and her beauty gained her many fine compliments, which she was by no means willing so soon to forego. She therefore immediately changed her tone; declared she did not wish to offend him, — spoke without thinking in the heat of the moment, — hoped he'd never think of leaving Southampton upon so trifling an occasion, — he may be assured the company had already forgotten the whole affair,—indeed it was not worth remembering, a mere inadvertency,—"so dear," said she, "I hope you won't go away. Mrs. Langton will be wanting you at the loo-table, and you

know how much attention she always pays you,—it would not be genteel to leave her so very abruptly."

All this was taking him on his weak side, but in the present instance she was doomed to fail.—Mr. Watson, although plentifully stocked with effrontery and assurance, found himself the object of so much mirth, even to the servants, that he had no inclination to present himself again to the company:—yet as he did not choose to acknowledge this to his dulcet wife to be the motive for his departure, he was glad she had furnished him with another.

When the card-table was placed for the loo party, and the dancing about to commence, Mrs. Langton sent her compliments and hoped for the honour of seeing Mr. and Mrs. Watson, for whom they waited, and she was vexed to hear that they had set off half an hour before:—however, they left their characters behind them, which served for delicious picking to the party for many days.

All this time, Mrs. Langton was making rapid strides in the favour of the Barlows. The young man fancied himself desperately in love, and she did not by any means try to persuade him that he was mistaken. — She was only two years his senior, and if dissipation should, by good fortune, rid her of her second husband, nobody knew what might happen; she therefore resolved to secure her influence, and add another string to her bow; — and strongly suspecting the game which was playing between Miss Julia Barlow and Mr. Lacket, she dropt a gentle hint to her mother, which was deemed so friendly, that no words were strong enough to express the obligation for such kind interest.

The young lady was interrogated on the subject, — but she had now made a confidante of Miss Fenning, — and she was too able an instructress to allow her pupil to be easily detected; so she denied it, and Mr. Lacket left the house the next

day. And as the party had now explored all the beauties of the neighbourhood, Mrs. Langton proposed their adjourning to Bath for a fortnight; — to this the Barlows agreed, on condition that Mrs. Langton should go on with them to Highgate, where they had a splendid house, instead of passing her winter at Bath. Nothing could be more in unison with that lady's wish; however, she wisely determined not to make herself too cheap,—she said she would consider of it, she had some friends coming from Ireland, on purpose to meet her at Bath, and she feared she should greatly offend them. — We strongly suspect these friends had sprung up quicker than mushrooms, and were born, bred, and matured by the convenience of the moment.

After a great deal of entreaty, she suffered herself to be persuaded, and declared that she felt herself so attached to Mrs. Barlow and her very charming

family, that she could no longer resist their kind importunities. And all things being adjusted, she found herself very comfortably placed in young Barlow's phaeton, (which she said she always preferred to a close carriage,) upon the road to Bath, which they reached in safety, and where we must leave them for the present.

CHAP. VIII.

How far that candle throws his beams,
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

Merchant of Venice.

Philanthropy.

Mrs. Mordant was pleased to see her son, who gave them the meeting at Canterbury, and they arrived without adventure in Sloane-street. Young Mordant was charmed to see his sister so much recovered, — for they were a most attached family.

His mother had been twice married, and had originally her own three thousand pounds settled upon herself. Upon the death of her first husband, she found herself possessed of this, and an annuity of seven hundred pounds per

annum; and as she had no children by him, this seven hundred pounds per annum was settled upon a nephew when she died.

Her second husband, Mr. Mordant, was a merchant in great business; and for some years after her marriage they lived in great splendour. But the numerous failures which happened to his constituents, had so injured his finances and depressed his spirits, that constant anxiety brought on a liver complaint,— of which he died two years afterwards, leaving only one son and one daughter, the former twenty, the latter only sixteen years of age.

Charles Mordant had been brought up in the counting-house of his father. He had seen it in all its prosperity, and marked the deference and respect paid to the firm. He had watched it too in its adversity; and felt that he had some cause for indignation. But it gave him a lesson of steadiness and foresight which was

of great use to him afterwards. — During his father's lingering indisposition, he, with the confidential clerk, transacted most of the business, consulting him upon all occasions; — and by his punctuality and great good conduct, he had the happiness of finding the business coming round again.

Mrs. Mordant had changed her scale of expenditure, from the first moment that she heard of a reverse in mercantile concerns. She cheerfully laid down her carriage; and her jointure, from this time, covered all the family expenses. And such was the economy of her management, that she contrived to spare enough to engage the best masters for her lovely daughter.

Upon the death of Mr. Mordant there was, after paying all the debts, an overplus of three thousand pounds; and as he had always borne an excellent character, his son found powerful friends to assist him. The foremost of these was a

Mr. Fortescue, who had always been upon habits of intimacy with the family, and had deeply interested himself in their concerns; and who, in the most handsome and liberal terms, consented to a union between his eldest son, the darling of his age, and Clara Mordant. — He had watched the progress of their attachment; and although his son might have looked for more wealth, he was entirely satisfied with her weight of excellence instead of gold.

The death of that valued son had nearly overwhelmed him in grief; and it was only owing to the unwearied attention of Miss Mordant that he had survived the sad shock. — That young lady and her mother had gone to the coast, in the fond expectation of meeting Henry on his landing.

On the first news of the melancholy catastrophe, they, with the scepticism natural to sudden and dreadful misfortunes, hastened back to town, in hopes

Mr. Fortescue might have some comfort to afford them. — Alas! the loss of the ship was confirmed; and not the slightest hope afforded of the possibility of escape of any of her crew.

From this moment, the amiable Clara devoted herself to the old man. She soothed and comforted him; and read to him, selecting those parts of Scripture which are so admirably calculated to sooth the wounded spirit; — and yet she did not let it appear that she studied to find them.

In performing these duties, she no doubt received consolation herself from the same divine source. Her mother and her friends were astonished at the fortitude she displayed: — some, indeed, thought it approached to apathy; but they little knew Clara who judged her thus, — and they had too soon reason to change their opinion.

Mr. Fortescue recovered; but as he recovered, she declined. There was no

longer any cause for exertion — any stimulus; and she felt now for herself.

Her mother became alarmed; and the increasing fever, and strong consumptive symptoms observed by the physician, determined her to take her immediately to Bristol: but Miss Mordant preferred Southampton, and the physician assented, — more, perhaps, to please his patient, than for any benefit he expected at either place. And Mr. Fortescue had the misery of apprehending he should be deprived also of his "angel daughter," as he used to call her. His pleasure, then, at hearing of her amended health, and again seeing her with returning good looks, was exceedingly great; and her mother was delighted to observe her take again to her music, and to those accomplishments she excelled in, — but which, for some time, had lost their power of amusing her. Nor did she object to enter again into those little musical parties,

where her performance had yielded so much delight to her friends.

When the family were alone, Mrs. Mordant took every opportunity of speaking of Mr. Trevillyan; and entertained her son with an account of their visit to Southampton. Both the ladies expressed their sentiments of the attention they had received from each of the gentlemen. Indeed, so much did he learn from his mother, that he felt great curiosity to see Mr. Trevillyan; —and luckily he was not long left to his imagination.

Mr. Trevillyan and his friend were highly amused with what John Harding could glean of the events we have recounted of Southampton; and the dryness and drollery of his observations, rendered those scenes he had been enabled to gather, singularly comical. And John had now so firmly established himself in the confidence and opinion of our friends, that they consulted him on all occasions.

Mr. Fanshaw now began to turn his thoughts towards town; and proposed to his friend to pass a few days at Bath, on their way thither: and in the early part of the following week, they arrived there. In the evening they attended the rooms; and soon recognised Mrs. Langton and Sir John Neerdowel, who received them with the most perfect ease and composure.

Mr. Fanshaw was studying something like an apology to the lady, for his abrupt departure; but he might have saved himself the trouble, for she gave him no opportunity of making it. She immediately introduced them to the Barlows, and entered upon general conversation; and soon after sat down to the card-table.

Mr. Barlow very courteously invited them to dinner the next day; but our friends, not choosing to identify themselves with Mrs. Langton, politely declined the invitation; but they afterwards

frequently met the old gentleman, and were not averse from the acquaintance. He called upon them; and they were each time more pleased with his good-humour and plainness of manner.

The day after their arrival, as they were sauntering from the Pump-room, they observed Colonel Desburgh walking very deliberately, with a chicken wrapt up in a scanty piece of paper, through which the two legs took the liberty of protruding themselves, in one hand; and some parsley and spinach tied up in a silk pocket-handkerchief, in the other.

Reader, we are not very sure if there was not half a pound of butter in a cabbage-leaf, in the middle of the spinach: — yet even now, as ever, there was something about this original that commanded respect, and regard too, from those who knew him. He was always clean, — always the gentleman in his manners. He seemed truly glad at the rencontre; but, far from making the slightest apo-

logy for his appendages, he appeared to think the only subject that required apology, was that of purchasing a chicken when they were so dear.

"I should not have done it for myself," said the good old veteran; "but Sophy is delicate of late, and I like to study her appetite." He then enquired how long they meant to stay at Bath, and cordially invited them to dine with them the following day.

The friends half declined, fearing, they said, if Mrs. Desburgh was not quite well they might inconvenience her; but this objection was over-ruled by the Colonel, who assured them Sophy was fond of company, — that she had no trouble, for that he was, as they saw, caterer-general, — and that he would invite her sisters to meet them. He urged it, too, with so much genuine hospitality, that the gentlemen, who had no sort of disinclination to indulge their propensity to study this extraordinary character, consented; and,

in the course of the morning, they left their cards at his lodgings.

The next day, at four o'clock, two hours later than the Colonel's usual dinner-hour, the gentlemen presented themselves in Westgate-Buildings, and were heartily welcomed by their host, and well received by the ladies. The dinner was extremely well dressed; and though not abundant, was enough for the party.

When Mr. Trevillyan praised the soup, and remarked they had a better cook than they found at Southampton, the Colonel said, that he had bespoke the dinner from a neighbouring tavern:—he had ordered it for three, well aware that what they would send would be enough for six.

The wine was excellent; and although spared by the host himself, he took care his guests should not follow his example. He said he knew it was unadulterated, for that he brought it over himself some years since. That, for himself, he had

from his earliest age always been very abstemious; — in youth, from inability to indulge in luxuries: — and when fortune showered down the ample means, he no longer wished them; — his habits of temperance were formed.

Our friends were pleased with an opportunity of getting him to speak of himself, and his own life; and though he never intruded his adventures, yet, when called upon over his own social board, he was by no means unwilling to gratify them by speaking of his campaigns. But his humility never forsook him; and it was really beautiful to find him wandering from the thread of his history, when he could not pursue it without speaking of some meritorious action, with which that history abounded.

Mr. Trevillyan and his friend were deeply interested. The former was vainly endeavouring to bring him back to a particular point at the raising of the siege of ——, which he had hastily passed

over, when the door opened, and a gentleman of about twenty-eight years of age, apparently a clergyman, burst in.

He instantly went up to the Colonel, and, without even noticing the company, began — "My dear sir! my generous friend! how shall I ever thank you for your bounty?"

The Colonel had slowly risen from his seat; and, far from partaking of the warmth of his visitor, said, very coldly, "Mr. Reynolds, I believe, — really sir, I am at a loss to understand what you mean; but, as you see I have friends with me at present, some other time will suit me better. I presume my servant would inform you that I had company."

"Perhaps he did, sir," replied Mr. Reynolds, with great agitation; "I heeded him not. My heart is too full for silence, and I care not who hears me. The world should know that such a character exists, and benefit by the bright example."

" 'Fore George! the lad is mad—stark mad!" exclaimed the Colonel, pettishly.

"The only method then, sir, to render me sane," returned Mr. Reynolds, "is to allow me to disburthen my mind; for I shall neither eat, drink, nor sleep, until I have done so. I am in a perfect fever!"

"Oh!" exclaimed the Colonel, with returning good-humour, "fasting is an excellent recipe for allaying fever—I never resort to any other. I remember, at the raising of the siege of ——, which we were speaking of just now, I was three days and nights undergoing excessive fatigue, with wet clothes, and scant provisions; and I believe this saved me from a ——"

"Stay, stay, sir," eagerly interrupted Mr. Reynolds; "pray tell us what was the nature of the fatigue you incurred, and how you came to be there, when your rank and duty warranted your being embarked with your own battalion, and

many leagues from this dreadful scene of danger: — was it your friendship to my father, or your general philanthropy, which kept you there to the last?"

Anger darted from the old veteran's eye, as he said indignantly, " And is it for an ignorant boy like you to call me to an account?"

" Oh, no; pardon me," returned Mr. Reynolds, " I know the story sir,—I have often heard my poor father speak of it; and he used to say your actions there were no doubt registered above, from whence alone you can be rewarded for such disinterested bravery.—Remember," added he, while tears glistened in his eye, " that it was to cover his embarkation, that you exposed yourself to those and many other hardships: — but for you, I had never known the inestimable value of that excellent man; and when he fell some years afterwards by your side, did you not take his children under your protection, denying yourself every

comfort to support us, and others who were left in the same unfortunate situation?"

"Sir," impatiently said the Colonel, who had vainly tried to interrupt his enthusiastic young friend, "unless you mean to affront me by all this rhapsody, I insist upon your instantly leaving the room."

Against this, however, our friends vehemently entered their protest; and they entreated for his stay so earnestly, that the old man at last submitted.— But he had now lost all idea of again speaking of himself; — he seemed to be thinking of those scenes which had just been brought to his mind, and was evidently glad when our friends proposed joining the ladies.

The Colonel allowed them to go alone; yet he held the light to direct them, — a lamp being far on the outside of his rules. He stayed half an hour after them, leaving Mr. Reynolds to get introduced

to his wife as he could. When, however, he appeared in the drawing-room, there was a placid smile of benevolence in his countenance, which one might almost think the emanation of recent prayer and thanksgiving; he was unusually animated, and though he cautiously abstained from any subject that could revert to days long past, yet he had so many lively anecdotes, and so much just observation, that our friends began to think they had only now learnt to appreciate his character.

To his wife he was attentive without being fulsome; and to her sisters he was affectionate without being dictatorial.

Miss Dennison saw and duly estimated his worth; she used all her influence with her sisters, to make them behave as they ought to such a friend, and if they disregarded her admonitions, they had real cause to blame themselves.

Our friends took an early leave of the Colonel and the ladies, and Mr. Rey-

nolds rose to depart at the same time; but his benefactor prevented him.

As soon as the door was shut after them, "I am much disappointed," said Mr. Fanshaw; "I was in hopes that young man would have accompanied us; I shall not be satisfied till I see him again; my curiosity is much excited to know more of this adventure; and when the Colonel permitted us to go to the drawing-room alone, I was just on the point of giving him my card, and requesting he would breakfast with us to-morrow, when I observed the old veteran watching us, as if jealous of my intention."

"I observed it also," said Mr. Trevillyan, "and I dare say he kept him back to-night merely to defeat us.—What if we walk about a little; they are early people, and I dare say will not detain us long."

And so it happened; for they were only about the third turn when they saw him leave the house. They soon joined

him, and learnt that the Colonel had shaken hands with him very affectionately; but that when he attempted again to express his gratitude to his noble-minded benefactor before his wife, he had greatly offended, and was afraid he had done wrong, for the Colonel's countenance was very much changed, and he almost turned him out of the house. "My obligations are, as you may perceive, not light, and there is no man upon earth I should so much dread offending. When I breakfast with you," added he, "I will give you the particulars."

Mr. Reynolds was punctual to his appointment, and in the course of the morning gave them the following little history.

"I lost my father, who fell by the side of this worthy man, when I was only fourteen, and at school. He left my sister and myself portionless; but the Colonel supplied his place, until he

thought I was old enough to study military tactics; — and after he had given himself much trouble and expense to forward me in this line of education, I imprudently told him I hated the profession, and finally refused to follow it. He was extremely displeased, but never condescended to reason with me; and in great irritation he told me, "to "follow the bent of my own inclinations; for that, 'fore George! from that minute, he would have nothing more to say to me.

"Distressed at being turned adrift on the wide world by the only friend I had in it, who was able or willing to protect me, and with merely the small allowance made by government, which, when joined to my sister's, was barely sufficient for *her* support, I began sadly to repent my temerity.

"I applied to the master of the school where I had been educated, to be received as junior assistant; and as I

had always studied the dead languages with great assiduity, I was accepted, and a small salary allotted me. My master let no opportunity escape of improving me. The second year I was surprised by his offering to double my salary; and when that was passed, he told me that he must "get me to college." This was always the height of my ambition; but, alas! how could I be supported? This obstacle he over-ruled, and said he had great interest there, and he thought could get me entered at Christchurch, where, if I proved myself a good scholar, I was sure of obtaining the countenance of the then learned Dean; for that industry and ability, not interest, was the sure road to his favour; and that he himself would supply me the means. I hesitated at incurring a debt I had no probable means of repaying; however, he was bent upon it, and I went.

"My rooms were furnished, and my books provided, as if by enchantment;—

and at intervals I received loans of money from my school-master; and this disinterested generosity in him strongly excited my suspicions; — for, though a good man, I never heard of his readiness in parting with his money, upon what appeared so bad a speculation, while I knew there were three young men, officers' sons, who were entirely supported by the Colonel; so I wrote to him, and besought him to give me back his countenance, for that I was aware it was to him only I was indebted for the advantages I now possessed. I received the following answer: —

"Young man, I am not in the habit of supporting boys in disobedience; and as you have found a more able protector, study to deserve his approbation. I thought to have made a general of you, and I shall not forgive your disobedience, until I see you on the road to a bishopric.

"CHARLES DESBURGH."

"This letter did not convince me that I was mistaken; and I determined to apply myself with double vigilance to deserve his favour. I could not help fancying that I must have been particularly recommended to the Dean, for I was conscious his kindness and attention surpassed my deserts. He took every opportunity of promoting my interest, and even gave his personal attendance when it was likely to do me service; and soon after, I was appointed tutor to a nobleman.

"This, I confess, was the worst business I ever undertook. I could learn myself, and I could even make schoolboys learn; but a young man of fashion, nearly of my own age, and just become his own master, was not so ductile. I had the temerity to complain to the Dean, who gave me the only reprimand I ever received from him.—'Sir,' said he, 'if I had my choice of this situation, or a sinecure, which do you think I should

prefer? Go, do your duty, — support your authority over your pupil, — and trouble me no more with idle complaints.'

"From this moment I devoted myself to the young nobleman; and every succeeding examination I had the gratification to hear him say, 'My Lord, I mark your progress,' or, 'you have been singularly fortunate in your tutor, mind him,' or something to that effect."

"One day that he invited me to his house, he asked me after Colonel Desburgh. I told him all I knew, and all I suspected. He said 'he had known him many years ago, and his family had received great obligations from him; but that they had lost sight of him ever since.'

"I tried to find out if there was any intercourse between them at present, but in vain; — the Dean was not a man of whom you could ask questions; he told you as much as he chose you should

know, and you could extract nothing more.

" I passed my degrees, and took orders, —and the Dean honored me last summer with an invitation to attend him on a tour to the Lakes.

" I was charmed with the proposal, and delighted with the excursion: it was surprising to find how much he could unbend,—even to playfulness of conversation. I felt that I had gained considerably upon him,—and on our return, he told me there was a living vacant, which he should like to see mine; but that even if he had interest enough to obtain it, it would require a heavy sum for the induction.

" What he mentioned was an impossibility, even to my most sanguine imagination. He told me he would lend me part, and that my pupil had generously offered to apply to his father for the rest; —but I could not think of incurring a debt, which, if I died in the course of two

or three years, could never be repaid.— Judge then of my astonishment a fortnight after, when the Dean sent for me and congratulated me on the possession of the living, and gave me the following letter, which he had just received from the Colonel:—

"DEAR SIR,

"It is a cordial to my old heart, to learn your continued good opinion of poor Charles Reynolds; and I am thankful to you for watching over his interests. If the living you speak of be advantageous, of which you are a better judge than I, I will gladly give the sum you speak of for the purchase of it; in doing which, I am only repaying a debt I owed his very worthy father. But it is by no means my wish that he should know this. Let him suppose the advowson procured by your interest, as a token of his merit and your friendship. I accept your offer of the loan for his induc-

tion, because it will make him economical, which I think a great virtue, and because I told him I never would forgive his disobedience to me, till I saw him on the road to a bishopric; and I would not forfeit my word. Charles has a younger sister to assist, which he has done many years from his savings; — this looks well. I am happy to hear your uncle enjoys himself still. It is many years since we met.

"I am, Dear Sir,

"Your obliged and faithful,

"Charles Desburgh."

"You may suppose, gentlemen, that I could not rest until I had seen my munificent benefactor. I neither stayed to eat or drink until I presented myself before him. I fear you will think I have said too much of myself, but I had two extraordinary characters to pourtray; — for, of the Dean's friendship I am proud and grateful, — and as he is generally

thought an austere man, I wish his private virtues to be known."

Our friends were extremely gratified, both with the visitor and the little narrative, and more than ever interested in their old soldier.

Mr. Reynolds accepted their invitation to dine with them, and they separated for the morning.

They called at Westgate-Buildings, where they found Mrs. Desburgh, not apparently in the best humour; and, as the Colonel was not at home, they shortened their visit, and met him afterwards. He appeared much pleased with the satisfaction they expressed of their yesterday's visit; but when they spoke of Mr. Reynolds, he said, "That lad has no common sense; "much learning hath made him mad." He has done me more injury than I can soon do away, by his folly! 'Fore George! they talk of women's tongues; I'll match him against any two I ever heard, — even make my

wife one. — Why the blockhead was so full of his rhodomontade after you left us, that Sophy insists I ought to keep her a carriage, — and ride to perdition in it myself, I suppose ; — and a house, forsooth, in Sidney Place ;—and a lacquey at every door of it ;—and I do not know what more whims she has imbibed. — I told her, when she had lost the use of her limbs, she should have a carriage ; and as for servants, one is as much as ever she or I had, — and now we've two, and they have half their time on their hands ; for I always market myself, rather than be cheated by them. And I'll tell you another thing,— never let your wife know what you are worth ; for they just think how many fine things it may procure them. Now, a large fortune was left me by a general officer, whom I had the great good chance to serve by mere accident. He, in the effervescence of gratitude, made his will in my favour, and died very soon af-

terwards. Now I have always considered this as a loan, given in trust to me for the benefit of the service; and so the interest, and great part of the capital, has been appropriated, and, during my life, so it shall. Now, if Sophy was to know this, either my plans must be destroyed, and some poor orphans beggared, or I must have constant dissensions with her. That foolish lad, to go and talk such nonsense! No, no; never let your wife know what you are worth."

Our friends smiled at his caution, and mentioned their intention of leaving Bath next day.

He said he was sorry to hear it; for that he had never met two young men more to his fancy: hoped to see them again soon, "and, by the way," said he, "if you have not fixed your residence in town, I should be glad if you would go to Mrs. Barclay, the widow of Captain Barclay, who has a large house in Albemarle-street, and lets part of it."

Mr. Fanshaw had chambers, and much wished Mr. Trevillyan to take his abode with him; but Lincoln's-Inn and Sloane-street were far apart; and somehow he flattered himself, that much of his time would be passed there. He therefore gladly took down Mrs. Barclay's address, and while he was doing it, the Colonel said, "One thing, however, I must apprize you of; — set this woman's clack once a-going, and stop it who can, — she will tell you of such extraordinary things: — which, having told a hundred times, and each with a little addition, she now believes true as Gospel, while in fact she makes them perfect lies. However, I can guard you against one subject which exposes this poor woman's failing in a terrible degree, — never lead her to speak of herself or her situation. — There is no need," added he, after a moment's consideration, "to say who recommended you, for if you mention my name, she may take it into her head to send me a letter

with thanks; and there is no need to pay postage for nothing. Mr. Fanshaw can give you references; and I believe she is rather particular in these things."

Our friends took an affectionate leave of this excellent old gentleman, and each determined the acquaintance should not end here.

CHAP. IX.

O woman! in our hours of ease,
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
And variable as the shade,
By the light quivering aspen made.
When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou.

SCOTT.

A Sad Tale.

THE gentlemen reached London in November 1805, and Mr. Trevillyan accepted a bed in the chambers, until he had settled with Mrs. Barclay.

The next morning, at rather an earlier hour than the formality of a first visit warranted, he presented himself in Sloane-street, and was agreeably flattered by his reception. Miss Mordant accorded him the kindness of an old acquaintance; Mrs. Mordant something more; and poor little Felix immediately recognised one who

had so often petted him; he barked and capered, sprung on his knees, and affectionately licked his hands, and would gladly have performed the same tribute to his face, had he been allowed.

Mrs. Mordant had thought much of Mr. Trevillyan's proposals; had consulted her son and Mr. Fortescue on the subject, both of whom strongly recommended its encouragement: — "for," said the latter, "if Trevillyan dies without a male heir, my second son, — now, alas! my only one, inherits his property. There is no doubt he will marry; and, by this union with our dear Clara, the property will still in a manner belong to the family; for Clara is my adopted daughter, as dear, and perhaps even more so, than my own; and at my death she will find herself considered such.

Mrs. Mordant gave Mr. Trevillyan an invitation to a little musical party for the next evening, which of course was eagerly accepted.

He mentioned his friend Fanshaw as an enthusiast, whose chambers were strewed with musical instruments

Mrs. Mordant hesitated; and then very unreservedly confessed, "that, as a casual acquaintance, they had been highly pleased with Mr. Fanshaw's conversation and abilities; but that there were some occasions when his behaviour with Mrs. Langton had been such, as to exclude their wish of cultivating his farther acquaintance, by extending an invitation to him."

Mr. Trevillyan entered into the vindication of his friend with more warmth than generally belonged to his manners; and, as Mrs. Mordant was willing to conciliate him, she at last sent the invitation.

After some hours passed very agreeably, in which he was charmed to find a visible improvement in the health of his fair friend, whose conversation was much more playful and animated than formerly, he took his leave, and hastened to

report progress, and deliver a lesson of morality to Mr. Fanshaw.

The next evening they repaired early to Sloane-street, and were nearly the first visitors.

Mr. Trevillyan had frequently heard Miss Mordaunt express her enthusiastic love of music, and he gave her credit for playing, as most unmarried young ladies generally do; but he had no expectation she excelled; for her modesty was so great, or her desire of attracting him so small, that she had never made the least display of her accomplishments. Her conversation showed her well-read, and of more mature judgment than is generally found at so early an age; and it was upon these rational grounds, — and perhaps the vanity of inspiring attachment in a bosom, which had once been the home of ardent affection, and which appeared now to repel any new impression, that he founded his hopes of happiness.

The party arrived, and she was called upon to commence the performance. Her friend, Miss Delaval, accompanying her on the harp.

Mr. Trevillyan just knew enough of music to admire the taste and science they displayed. It is true Miss Mordant did not possess great brilliancy of execution, — he had heard many who far surpassed her, — but in the touching and sentimental, she had few rivals. Miss Delaval, by the grace of her accompaniment, contrived to show off her friend's peculiar excellence to great advantage.

Fearing, however, that his partiality might bias his judgment, he lightly crossed the room to the place where Mr. Fanshaw was standing with his back against the wall, and his arms folded, in the attitude of deep attention, and asked him "What he thought of the performance?"

"Pshaw," was the answer, and "how can you talk now?" was hastily added.

This impatience of interruption told

him all he wished to know, and the plaudits were loud at the end of it.

In the course of the evening, she sung; and our friends were not disappointed. Her voice, like her play, was clear and sweet, rather than loud or powerful; yet so plaintive and so touching were her notes, that it was impossible to hear her without emotion. Perhaps the knowledge of her situation gave more than ordinary interest to her performance: — perhaps, too, the actual circumstance had added something to her natural pathos.

The party was not large, and was chiefly composed of the most respectable mercantile families, amongst whom our friends found a well-informed and very agreeable society. Here, however, as in all other ranks, they detected specimens of folly and absurdity.

Some dilettante performers, who really sung delightfully, when they chose, appeared fearful of making themselves too

cheap, required a great deal of entreaty, before they could condescend to indulge the company, — and then recollected nothing they were asked to perform; or, when the music was placed before them, said, they "would try it; but really they had never attempted it before." Although it was an equal chance if some of the present party had not heard them perform it the preceding evening.

A scion from this mould was present, and appeared to be using every endeavour to get introduced to a Miss Dareal, the most dashing belle of this society. She was the only daughter of a very rich man, — had been showily educated, — played brilliantly, — sung nothing but Italian, — and piqued herself on having the most expensive masters.

During her performance, Mr. Jasmine was in ecstasies. Some time afterwards, he was talking in another room to a circle of the concert he had been invited to at Lord ——'s, and to which his voice was his

only passport; Mrs. Mordant interrupted him, with requesting he would take a part in a favourite duet of Mozart's.

He knew Miss Dareal sung it, and instantly followed her into the music-room: when however he found Miss Delaval seated at the piano forte, and understood it was to accompany her that he was called, he took his glass, and very conceitedly looked through it at the music; and just then recollected he had "tried that set of it before, and that it was really so bad he could make nothing of it, —could not go through it." Saying this, he very cavalierly turned on his heel, and went back to the group he had left.

Mr. Fanshaw had been an observant spectator of all this. The study of character was his chief amusement; and when he detected rudeness like this, he delighted in counteracting its influence. With marked indignation, therefore, he

said aloud, before Mr. Jasmine had made his exit, "I have never seen any other set of that duet: — it is long since I sang it; but if no one who can do it more justice will attempt it, I shall be happy to accompany Miss Delaval."

That young lady had immediately left the instrument, upon the affronting conduct of Mr. Jasmine. She had felt his insolence, and was grateful to Mr. Fanshaw for his attention; but she declined singing, until solicited by Mrs. Mordant.

The duet was extremely beautiful, and very well executed. At the commencement of it, Mr. Jasmine returned with some others to the music-room; and his curled lip of contempt, showed how little he feared a competitor. He talked as if in defiance, until he found no one to listen to him from the interest they all took in the performance; and then he hummed another air, and retired to the other room, where he reclined upon a sofa, and appeared nearly asleep.

Miss Delaval sang divinely. She was not regularly handsome; but her form was perfect. She was the youngest daughter of a merchant, who dying young, left his wife and two daughters ten thousands pounds each. That of the mother was to be divided at her death between his girls.

They retired to Devonshire; and, at a sea-bathing place on that coast, became acquainted with a Captain Reynard, a man who lived in great style, and had very captivating manners. He soon singled out the eldest Miss Delaval. He represented himself as the youngest brother of a wealthy nobleman, and that he had an estate of fifteen hundred pounds a year left him by his father.

After two months' courtship they were married. Setting off from her mother's house in a beautiful new carriage-and-four, they went to London, and took a small house in Harley-street, where he introduced her to some genteel people,

and wished her, as much as possible, to shun her former acquaintance; but finding her attachments stronger than her pride, and that she preferred her old friends, he removed her to Bath; where Mrs. Delaval and Fanny joined them, and passed a very pleasant winter.

He was a most attached husband, and very attentive to his mother and sister-in-law, who almost idolized him. He took an opportunity of advising them to put out their money on mortgage, which yielded so much more interest than the funds, that he had invested his wife's money most advantageously in this manner; and advised his mother-in-law to consult any one on whose judgment she could rely. For himself, he was so satisfied, that had he a hundred thousand pounds, it should all be so disposed of.

Poor Mrs. Delaval was not a woman of strong intellect. She had the most implicit confidence in Mr. Reynard, and besought him to take the trouble off her hands.—

Fanny was too young and too inexperienced to enter into the subject; and he obtained full power to get possession of the money. Sealed-up papers were placed in her hands, which, he said, were the parchments of the mortgage.

They made a tour to the lakes in Westmoreland, and to the highlands of Scotland, all together; and returned to Mrs. Delaval's house, in Devonshire,— where Mrs. Reynard was to be confined of her second child.

Hitherto, then, for three years, every thing had passed off delightfully:—nothing could be happier than the party. We are now to contemplate the reverse.

As soon as his wife had presented him with a fine little boy, and she was going on well, he was "obliged to leave them upon business." For three weeks, he wrote constantly,—then less frequently, —and soon after not at all.

The ladies were exceedingly distress-

ed; and when the time came that Mrs. Delaval ought to receive the interest of her money, she was at a loss; for he had always transacted the business for her. They wrote to their friends in town, who made every enquiry in vain.— He was no where to be found.

Mrs. Delaval took her parcel of parchment to an attorney in the neighbourhood, a man of strict integrity, who soon discerned that no man of business had ever drawn these deeds; that they were forgeries altogether; but exceedingly interested for these simple, unsuspecting women, he went himself to London, traced him till within the last month, and then lost sight of him altogether.

The truth could no longer be hid from Mrs. Reynard. She would not, for a long while, believe any thing to his disadvantage; but when their friend returned with a confirmation of all he had before apprised them of, and that they were absolutely left pennyless, her spirits gave

way. But the finishing stroke was yet to come.

In the newspapers, some months afterwards, there was an account of a person being taken up in the North of England, who had passed himself off as the Honourable Colonel Cole, and who had drawn many bills in that gentleman's name. He had cut a great dash, — had stayed a long while in one place, where he had made himself very agreeable to a young lady of some fortune, and had actually married her. — His whole conduct appeared that of a madman.

Our unfortunate ladies read the account and thought no more of it, until, shortly afterwards, their friend the attorney called, and requested to speak with the mother; he told her, as gently as he could, that Colonel Cole was no other than Mr. Reynard, and that his trial for forgery would come on at Lancaster the ensuing assizes.

Mrs. Delaval, though ruined herself, felt much more for her amiable daughters, to whom it was quite necessary to communicate the sad information she had received.

Mrs. Reynard's health had declined, since first she doubted her husband's integrity; and she had hardly strength to move from one chair to another. No sooner, however, did she learn the dreadful situation of that husband, who had hitherto appeared so worthy the fond affection she accorded him, — of the father of her beautiful infants, — than she forgot all her wrongs, all his treachery, — and, with the amiable strength and tenderness of a female heart, she even endeavoured to palliate his atrocities.

She besought her mother to proceed instantly to town, and use every possible exertion to save him; while she, her sister, and her children would go immediately to him.

All endeavours to dissuade her were

fruitless; and this delicate woman, who appeared but yesterday unequal to the slightest exertion, was to-day supported by the most virtuous feelings which ever warmed the human heart, to undertake a journey of some hundred miles; and she never rested till she reached Lancaster-Castle. She obtained permission and rushed into the presence of her husband, just as he had, by his elegant manners and excessive plausibility, shaken the opinion of his guilt in the mind of a counsellor he was consulting.

Her appearance at this juncture was a corroboration of his villainy: he felt that it was so, and attempted no further subterfuge. He received his wife in his arms, where she fainted, and remained without any sign of animation for a long while. Her wan cheek and faded form seemed to affect him sensibly: he fell upon his knees, and, regardless of the presence of the counsellor, acknowledged his crimes. He could assign no reason for

his conduct, but confessed when he married her, he was deeply in debt; that her sweetness and virtue had recalled him from many evil propensities: but that, having spent nearly all the money entrusted to him, a kind of phrenzy possessed him, and he was hardly accountable for his actions. Yet," added he, "if it is possible, with the assistance of that worthy man, for me to escape punishment this time, I do solemnly promise the rest of my life shall be devoted to you and my dear children."

"Oh," said his compassionate wife, "you must — you shall be spared. My mother is now in London; she will wait upon the Secretary of State; she will move heaven and earth to save you;" — she caught a glance of the glistening eye of the counsellor; — "and do you, sir," said she, "let me owe to your exertions the life of my husband; and suffer me hereafter to teach my poor babes to lift up their little hands in prayers for the pre-

server of their father. — Alas! if he falls, I feel they will have no parent; for I can never survive his disgrace."

Mr. Newell was deeply affected: he promised all in his power, though he knew he could not succeed, for there were many other accounts against him. He wrote a note to his sister, who was his housekeeper, to prepare her for the reception of this sorrowing party, and then took Miss Delaval and the children to his own house, where they received every kindness.

Mrs. Reynard would not leave her husband. She consoled him, and, unwilling herself to contemplate the enormity of his crime, she would not permit herself to doubt his acquittal.

The time arrived, — the trial came on, — Mrs. Reynard was all agitation, all strength, all fortitude. She insisted on going into court; Mr. Newell strongly objected, but finding resistance only served to determine her the more, and fearing too certainly the issue of the

affair, he desired a gentleman, a friend of his, to attend her, and to place themselves where she may be got out before the verdict was returned.

The trial occupied several hours; every possible endeavour was used to save him; but his hand-writing, and the whole of the evidence of the forgery was so plain, there could be no doubt on the subject. Mrs. Reynard saw all this, and she supported it. She willingly left the court when her friends proposed it; they returned to Mr. Newell's; she begged the gentleman to wait for her a moment; she went to her trunk, and soon returned with a box containing jewels, most of which had been presented to her by her unfortunate husband.

"Sir," said she, "these baubles can never be useful to me more; — go, take them; sell them for what they will bring, and order me a post-chaise and four; for I must go to London instantly. — He shall not die," added she, in excessive emotion.

Mr. Newell soon after came home.— She asked no questions; for his looks were sufficient. She told him her intention, and that worthy man strongly encouraged any thing that could divert her thoughts, and take her from the dreadful scene which must shortly take place.— He advanced the money upon the jewels,—gave her introductions to the most likely people to assist her,—although he told Miss Delaval he despaired of success,—and wrote himself to prepare them for her reception.

She went to take leave of her husband. —He embraced her in agony,—again and again entreated her prayers and forgiveness; and he had for once so much consideration for her, as to hide his own despair, and keep her in ignorance of the fatal day which was to terminate his existence. Nothing but the fervent desire of saving him, could have forced her from him.

She set off attended by her sister,

leaving the children with Miss Newell. — They travelled all night; and the next morning Mrs. Reynard fell a sacrifice to the extraordinary exertions she had used, both personal and mental; — she was so ill as to be obliged to be taken to bed, where she continued insensible for two days and nights. Miss Delaval was scarcely in better case; but as Mr. Newell had given her no hopes of the success of the journey, she the less regretted the delay. It was not until the night of the sixth day, that they met their anxious mother in town:—they were immediately put to bed; and upon her waking next morning, the first sounds which Mrs. Reynard heard, was a cry in the street of the last speech of the husband she had so fondly loved. — It was her knell.

The fondness of a mother, nor even the smiles of her children, had now the least effect over her; and she died at the end of three weeks.

Nothing could be more forlorn than

the survivors: — used to elegancies and luxuries, they were now left with only one thousand pounds, — the wreck of all their fortune. — The youngest child had been nursed in misery,

"His cradle was the couch of care,
"And sorrow rock'd him in it:
"Fate seem'd her saddest garb to wear,
"On the first day that saw him there,
"And darkly shadow'd with despair
"His earliest minute."

He had never been healthy, — and being suddenly weaned on the melancholy result at Lancaster, pined, and soon joined its mother.

Mrs. Delaval felt this an accumulation of suffering; and it was only by the dutiful affection and kindness of her surviving daughter Fanny, that she supported so many afflictions. All their friends, however, paid them the most affectionate attention; and Fanny had the fortitude and good sense to offer herself as singing mistress in the families of her former intimates.—She was well qualified for the

office,—she was eagerly accepted and generally patronised:—and the great interest and attention with which she devoted herself to the improvement of her pupils, rendered her so popular, that she was obliged to decline many scholars; and she had the happiness of supporting herself, and her mother and niece, in great comfort, by her industry:—but these, as we have seen, were virtues beneath the admiration of Mr. Jasmine.

Mr. Fanshaw, however, was greatly delighted with her singing, and the insult she received gave him more interest in her. He sat by her during supper, and seemed much disposed to admire her.

Reader, we have often remarked, and we dare say you are not behind-hand with us, how mere trifles frequently move the main-springs of our destiny. Had Mr. Jasmine sung with Miss Delaval, no doubt Mr. Fanshaw would have been delighted; perhaps, too, he would have remembered the gratification the next day;

but here it would have ceased, and no more been thought of. As it happened, however, far different was the result. Their voices harmonised delightfully;—they had been identified in the same praise; and the duet pronounced the best performance of the evening.

He was in perfect good-humour with himself; and we believe the consequence of this generally is, that of being pleased with those around us. He exerted his powers to entertain, and was successful. Miss Delaval thought him the most agreeable man she had ever met with, and they separated with the mutual wish of meeting again. There was little doubt of this:—Mr. Fanshaw's voice and his gentlemanly readiness to afford his abilities to the general amusement, rendered him a very valuable acquisition to these musical parties: and the two friends soon found themselves domesticated in a very pleasant society.

Mr. Jasmine, who had frequently offended the society by his manners, was superseded; and we learn that he profited by the lesson.

Mr. Trevillyan and Mr. Fortescue acknowledged relationship, and the old gentleman paid him great attention.

CHAP. X.

As you have one eye upon my follies,
Turn the other on the register of your own.
Merry Wives of Windsor.

Masquerade.

THINGS went on this way for several months, Mr. Trevillyan gaining perceptibly in the good graces of Miss Mordant; and his friend appeared very much taken with Miss Delaval.

The parties now assumed a much gayer aspect. Dancing generally finished the evening's amusements; and our friends were not less pleased with them.

As they were returning home one night, after these gay meetings, they found there was a masquerade going on at Willis's Rooms;—they were in high glee,

and quite ready for a frolic; so they prepared themselves with dominos, and joined the motley group.

They had not long been in the rooms, ere two females, expensively dressed, and apparently respectable, and whom they had before observed keeping themselves out of view, as if waiting for some one, made up to them; and one, who was much more forward than the other, seized Mr. Fanshaw's arm, and said, "We install you our knights, until we can find our own."

Our friends were somewhat astonished; but they humoured the adventure, passing a hint to keep close to each other. After they had walked about for some time, a harlequin came up and accosted Mr. Trevillyan's lady, which her friend observing, very dexterously watched her opportunity, and stole away his wand, —that magic badge of office!—She quickly disengaged herself from Mr. Fanshaw's arm, and ran round the room with

such velocity, harlequin pursuing, that every body made way for her, and many stood on the benches to view the sport.

Shouts of "Well done, little one,—well done, little one;—now harlequin!" came from every quarter.

Mr. Trevillyan's fair one could not enjoy the scene; she became greatly agitated. "For God's sake, sir," said she, "when she comes round again, let us cover her escape; I would not, for worlds, that she should be known. What an unfortunate night!—I wish to Heaven I had never consented to come."

These ejaculations, which seemed almost involuntarily made, did not lessen the curiosity of our gentlemen. When the runaway again reached the spot where they were standing, she, with a great spring, flung the wand so high, that it rested on one of the branches of the chandelier; and while all eyes were attracted to it, our party slipped out of the room.

The lady was out of breath, and somewhat exhausted. Mr. Fanshaw brought her wine, and besought her to take off her mask: she contrived, however, to take the wine without showing her face; and soon recovering, they sallied forth again to the crowded room.

Soon after, a tall, handsome-looking man spoke to Mr. Trevillyan's lady, and hoped she had "no fatigue at the Review the other day."

She attempted to pass without noticing him.

"It was not a good situation that you took, I think," said the same tall man.

"I don't know what you mean, sir," said she, in great trepidation; "I wish you'd leave me alone."

"O fye," said the stranger; "but if you are so cruel as to forget it, I know others that never will."

Mr. Fanshaw's lady, seeing how agitated her friend was, now interfered.— "And who are you, sir," exclaimed she,

"who presume to make enquiries of us?"

"Fair damsel," replied the gentleman, "I am a soldier, and at your service."

"I dare swear you are," said she, "and of the Irish brigade." — The laugh with which this was received by a group who had collected to hear what was going on, greatly disconcerted the man-of-war; and while he was thinking of an answer, the party escaped.

Supper was now announced; — most of the company laid aside their masks. — Not so our damsels; — no persuasions could induce them to do so: — they rose early from the table, and when the rooms filled again, they observed the same tall gentleman coming towards them. — "Sir," said Mr. Fanshaw's lady, "pray be so good to learn who that gentleman is. — We'll wait for you in this corner."

The tall man passed in the crowd, and

observed them not; but he was evidently looking out for somebody.

As soon as Mr. Fanshaw was gone, and the man-of-war far off, Mr. Trevillyan's lady said, "I feel very faint; pray, sir, have the goodness to fetch me a glass of water; we shall be quite safe here till you return."

Mr. Trevillyan left them for this purpose; and the moment they found themselves alone, they hastened to the place where they had ordered their carriage: and when the two gentlemen returned from their different missions, at nearly the same moment, they found themselves cajoled, and their birds flown.

The crowd was so great, that they could not immediately get through it. Just as they reached the outer door, they saw their fair friends driving away in a superb carriage, which went off full speed, the footman riding by the coachman; — the fair ones kissed their hands most provokingly, as they drove away.

As soon as our friends could disengage themselves from the throng, which extended outside the doors, and which had retarded their progress some seconds, they set off, running as if their lives depended on their velocity; — thus proving to demonstration, what we have long suspected, that curiosity is not exclusively a feminine attribute. Yet, like poor Tom of old, they suffered for indulging it.

It happened, that some light-fingered gentry had taken rather too great liberties with the pocket of a gentleman, who instantly missed a very superb snuff-box; and having his arms pinioned by the crowd, he was unable to seize the rascal. He immediately vociferated, "Stop thief, stop thief;" — which signal ran through the crowd in a moment.

The delinquent, however, had been more used to mobs than our heroes; he therefore dexterously elbowed through this the instant after them; — he followed them, and called out "Stop them, stop

the thieves," as loudly as the best of them.

The watch was, by an extraordinary, and for the gentlemen, an unlucky chance, upon the alert, and seized our unfortunate friends, just as they had gained so far upon the carriage as to be contemplating the attempt of getting up behind it.

Quite out of breath with the violent exertion they used, they had no power to remonstrate; and for a few moments were incapacitated from proceeding, and then thinking it better to submit than contend, they allowed themselves to be led very peaceably to the watch-house.

There, however, Mr. Fanshaw expected his name and address would be sufficient to emancipate them; but three o'clock in the morning was not a very propitious hour for investigating the truth of his assertions.

Mr. Trevillyan then offered a bribe; but whether it was too small, or whether these guardians of the night were more

conscientious in those days than now, is not for us to determine; certain it is, it was refused, and the gentlemen informed they might make themselves easy for some hours at least.

They did not find themselves the only Unfortunates. In one corner of the room sat a figure much muffled up, and as if not wishing to be recognised, in a travelling dress, apparently all new; — but in whom, by an accidental ray from a passing light, our friends detected Mr. Lacket, who was, according to John Harding's account, paying his devoirs to the purse of Miss Barlow, and who, by the assistance of Miss Fenning, seemed likely to succeed in obtaining it.

Perhaps, in more agreeable situations they would not have noticed him; but now they were fellow-sufferers in misfortune; so they hailed him, recounted their own disaster, and begged to know what had occasioned his nocturnal visit to this place of amusement.

"It is a very provoking affair," an-

swered Mr. Lacket, after some hesitation. "I had made an appointment of great importance at Willis's Rooms, and was hastening to fulfil it, when my postillion, — my coachman, I mean, — got himself entangled with a gentleman's carriage :— a quarrel ensued, — and I, fearing to be too late for my appointment, jumped out, and assisted the post-boy, — pshaw ! my coachman,—to get forward. This was prevented, however, by the gentleman's coachman, who soon gathered a crowd about us : — I was taken hold of, and brought here; and such is the peculiarity of my case, that I do not wish it known."

"You would have been wiser," said Mr. Fanshaw, "had you left your coachman to fight his own battles at the beginning of the affray."

"I should hardly have been so raw," answered Mr. Lacket, who, in his eagerness to clear himself from the imputation of folly, forgot the secret he was disclosing, "to have interfered, if I had not

some very valuable property in the chaise: — I could not leave *that.*"

Our friends now began to suspect the truth; and in order to ascertain it, they mentioned the rencontre they had had with the ladies; and soon brought him to confess he believed those ladies were the objects of his anxiety.

When he found there was no chance of his liberation in time to make good his engagement, he sent for an acquaintance, and requested him to reconnoitre a particular spot in the masquerade rooms, where he would find two ladies; and if they were not at that particular place, to seek them amongst the company. He described their persons; — and he was to mention a certain review, which he conceived would lead them to suppose he must be connected with him; and that, if they appeared to understand him, then he was to mention his name, otherwise carefully to avoid it.

This tall friend did, as we have seen, accost the damsels, as he did many others;

— but as they had no prior intimation, the ladies, conscious of their deserts, feared he was a spy observing them; and as he saw them under the protection of two gentlemen, it was unlikely these could be the ladies he was in quest of.

The fact was this: — Mr. Lacket had had many private interviews with his Love since the family returned to Highgate; and he, with the assistance of Miss Fenning, so far mastered Miss Barlow's judgment, that she agreed to elope; — and her able instructress was determined to make their elopement subservient to her eager wish of attending a masquerade.

It was settled that Miss Fenning was to receive an invitation from some of her grand acquaintance, which should give her the liberty of taking her friend with her, for the express purpose of going to Willis's Rooms. The note arrived, — was shown to Mrs. Barlow, who advised that her husband should know nothing of the masquerade, but that he should be told it was to a private ball at that lady's

house; and she herself gave orders to the coachman, in what particular place he was to wait to take them up again.

They returned home in due time, and nothing was suspected.

But to return to the watch-house.—Mr. Fanshaw, as if by accident, mentioned the name of Barlow; and, in the agitation and confusion Mr. Lacket evinced, found a confirmation of all their suspicions.

Half frightened out of his wits by the facts our heroes had detected, and alarmed by the exposure they had the power of making, he, with almost painful humility, implored their silence; which Mr. Trevillyan very readily promised, and was surprised to hear his friend thus address his intimidated auditor:—"Mr. Lacket, it is quite impossible for me to lend myself to this affair, which I should be doing, if I allowed such a dishonourable plan to be executed by the daughter of any man;—but Mr. Barlow is a man I know, and

respect; — and, before I make any promise to you, you must give me your word of honour to prosecute this affair no farther. I am no stranger to your disgraceful league with Miss Fenning; and I candidly assure you, I shall 'cause a strict eye to be kept over you both: — the whole shall be brought to light,—and the bond you have so scandalously passed between you brought before a court of justice, if there is, for the future, the slightest intercourse between you."

Mr. Lacket stood aghast; — his nerves were none of the strongest; — and the mention of Miss Fenning's bond, and a court of justice, made his teeth chatter with apprehension.

How it was possible for any one to get to the knowledge of all these things, surpassed his comprehension, — and, assisted by the time of night, the gloomy darkness of the place, and the agitation of spirits, we are not quite sure if he did not take him for some supernatural agent.

"Sir," said he, "I would very readily promise what you desire, if I should be the only sufferer. At first, I confess, Miss Barlow's money was my attraction; now, however, I would willingly sell half my days, to pass the other half with her; — and I have every reason to believe the attachment mutual; — but I will give you my honour, that I will make her acquainted with my real situation, which I have long wished to do, but I wanted resolution; and she shall be the arbitress of my fate.

"My mother brought me up as a gentleman, — the first of that line in the family, — but without any apparent means of support. — I tried to earn a little by my pen; but it was heavy labour and scanty existence. I supposed, if I married Miss Barlow, her father, who is dotingly fond of her, would not withhold his forgiveness, and that he might place me in some way of business; — for indeed there is no labour I would shrink

from, if by it I could support her in comfort. Nobody can tell the hours of painful dejection I have passed, when contemplating the step I was to take."

"If these are really your sentiments," returned Mr. Fanshaw, "they do you more honour than I gave you credit for; and perhaps it may be in my power to assist you, if you act towards me with openness and integrity. Call upon me to-morrow morning, and I will talk to you farther."

He then gave him his card; and at that moment he was pleased to find John Harding entering the watch-house, and with him the gentleman who had lost his snuff-box, who happened to be a friend of his: — and as he proved to the attending constable, that neither of the gentlemen was the delinquent who had rifled his pocket, they were set at liberty.

Mr. Fanshaw pledged himself for Mr. Lacket's appearance, when necessary, and he was released also; and he felt

satisfied of the honour of his intentions, when he said, "I know not what to do with my luggage: — it contains all I have in the world, and a trunk of Miss Barlow's. If, sir, you would favour me by taking charge of it, — for I have now no place to take it to, — I shall feel very grateful."

The two friends got into a coach, which the provident John had provided; and were no sooner seated, than Mr. Trevillyan began — "I confess, my dear Fanshaw, I thought you quite a Quixote when first you took your young spark to task; for if the girl loves him, and her father has too much money, I don't see why he should not help her to spend it: — but I knew nothing of the bond! How, in the name of fortune, did you find that out?"

"I never found out any thing of the matter," answered Mr. Fanshaw; "but it would be very hard, if, with the assistance of our observant friend John, and a

little knowledge of the world, a lawyer may not draw his own inferences. I concluded, that Miss Fenning knew her own interest much too well to disqualify herself for the line she is in, merely for the pleasure of match-making. There must, then, be an agreement between them,—and so you see it has happened."

"I give you credit for a lawyer's brain," said his friend; "but pray what do you mean to do with your spark?"

"I cannot exactly determine, until I see more of him and his abilities. At any rate, I feel happy in rescuing an innocent girl from the clutches of that infamous jade, and a beggar. If he proves worthy, and there is something of honesty about him, perhaps I may get him employment, and become a match-maker.—Perhaps you think me romantic:—very likely I am;—but we shall see."

At this time, they arrived in Albemarle-street; and great was Mr. Trevillyan's surprise to find Mrs. Barclay up, and

anxiously looking out for them, — a nice fire prepared, and refreshments laid out. He made many apologies for the trouble he had occasioned her.

"Trouble, sir!" said she; "I only wish you had been so good to inform me at first who it was recommended you here. I feel quite shocked that any one coming from Colonel Desburgh, should be one hour in my house without receiving every attention it is in my power to bestow. But for that man, I should have been a beggar, — and worse than that, infamy would have been attached to me. Oh, sir!" added she, with great emotion, "upon God's earth there steps not such another creature! — Another time, gentlemen, you must allow me the pleasure of speaking of him: at present, you must be fatigued. Pray let me help you."

While our friends were comforting themselves with the good things before them, John Harding was in the room;

so they repressed their curiosity on one subject to indulge it in another, and enquired of John how he came to look for them in so very unlikely a place to find them?

John said he had waited up very patiently, until long after Mr. Trevillyan's usual time of returning, when he became uneasy, and determined to sally forth in quest of him. He went up stairs to call the servant to rise and let him in when he returned; and the noise he made in so doing, had disturbed Mrs. Barclay, who being informed of his anxiety, immediately rose herself.

John went to Mrs. Mordant's house, where no light appearing in the hall, he concluded they were all gone to bed; — he even rang and rapt at the door, but no notice was taken of it. He then went to Lincoln's Inn, and learnt from the porter at the gate, that Mr. Fanshaw was not returned to his chambers; and this lessened his apprehensions; — for he

thought if they were not separated, they were equal to any thing they could meet with. So he went home again, and was invited to Mrs. Barclay's parlour, — an honour he had never before received.

He sat himself down in a distant chair, and began again to express his anxieties for his master; and desirous of showing his consequence, and the footing he was upon with the gentlemen, recounted their visit to Southampton, — spoke of the characters they met there, and amongst the rest, of Colonel Desburgh.

At this name, Mrs. Barclay became impatient to know if it was the same she knew. Finding that it was, and that he had recommended them to her house, she expressed her vexation at not having known it earlier; and now became as interested for his master as John could be.

The clock had struck two some time, when she recollected there was a masquerade that night, and suggested the probability of their going there.

John fancied they would not have gone, without letting him know something of their intentions; but he set off once more, to reconnoitre at the entrance of the rooms. He had not been there long ere he was joined by Mr. Lacket's servant, whom he knew at Southampton. They entered into conversation, and the man told him that he had that evening been discharged by his master; that he knew he was to be at the masquerade, with a post-chaise to take him, (and, he strongly suspected, one Miss Barlow,) off; — for that there was another pair of horses ordered to wait at the outside of the town for them. He had stationed himself there on purpose to catch a glance of his proceedings; but feared they had taken some other door, as he had seen nothing of them. "But," added he, "I think I saw Mr. Fanshaw being conducted to the watch-house, on suspicion of picking a gentleman's pocket, just now. I cannot be certain it was him, for

I only saw his side face. — At one time I was thinking of following him, and that I might get a fee for identifying him at the watch-house; but I did not like to lose the last sight of my master, for he has been a very good friend to me, and I'm sure I heartily wish he may succeed in life; — but I might as well have gone ——"

This was enough for John, who contrived to give him the slip. He soon overtook two gentlemen, and heard one of them regretting the loss of his magnificent snuff-box, a present from a very valued friend.

John accosted him; and said he strongly suspected his master and another gentleman were taken up on suspicion, and were now detained at the watch-house.

At first, they appeared to suppose some trick was intended them; but John had lived too long with his master not to have imbibed some of his manners.

His look, therefore, of haughty integrity assured the gentlemen, who were then on the road to the place of detention, having heard that the supposed thief was taken.

They asked the name of the gentleman; and when John answered, his master was Richard Trevillyan, esquire, of Eldrington, in the county of Hants, he despised their ignorance, at not knowing a character which he had always been taught to suppose so popular.

They somewhat retrieved their credit, however, when one of them declared he knew Mr. Fanshaw well, and was exceedingly sorry to have caused him the slightest inconvenience.

John saw a coach upon the stand; and as it was a damp morning, desired the man to follow him with it. Our friends commended his forethought; and it was near five o'clock when they separated.

The next morning, when he paid his visit in Sloane-street, he was very seriously informed that their house had been attempted by thieves; that the man-servant, who slept below, had distinctly heard them attempting the street-door, about three o'clock; and that it was entirely owing to his spirited conduct in threatening them, that they desisted.

The ladies were much surprised at the amusement Mr. Trevillyan seemed to derive from an incident so truly alarming; but they heartily joined in it when they learnt that John Harding had been the only aggressor; and that the boasted courage and gallantry of their man, consisted in keeping himself quite quiet and unseen.

He then told them the history of his night's adventure; and highly amused his hearers by them, and by the scene of the confession of their quondam acquaintance, Mr. Lacket, of whom our ladies were rather inclined to think fa-

vourably [illegible] this led them to recollect, that in [illegible] papers of the preceding day, they had [illegible] the marriage of Miss Dennison to [illegible] Reverend Charles Reynolds, rector [illegible]e place in Gloucestershire. They [illegible] their pleasure at hearing it [illegible] they all agreed that she was th[illegible] deserving of the sisters. They [illegible] too, with great enthusiasm of the Colonel, whose character had been [illegible]hfully delineated to them by his [illegible], Mr. Fanshaw.

[illegible]king leave, he excused himself for the evening, as he and his friend had engaged themselves to Mrs. Barclay, from whom he expected to hear more of the old veteran.

CHAP. XI.

Of her that loved him with such excellence,
That when the greatest stroke of treachery fell,
It struck her to the heart. Yet dying,
She forgave.

Henry VIII.

An Episode.

THE friends found themselves very comfortably seated in Mrs. Barclay's parlour; and when the tea things were removed, she began — "I requested the pleasure of your company this evening, gentlemen, for the satisfaction of speaking of a character who must interest every one who knows him; and who is, as far as my knowledge of the world goes, quite unequalled. But in speaking of him, I am obliged to trouble you with more of my own concerns than may be amusing to you. Indeed, in my life there have been

only short gleams of brightness; — the sunshine was soon overclouded by blasts of affliction: but I will make it as short as possible.

"My brother, my sister, and myself, were the children of Colonel Robertson, of the Guards. My mother was a woman of high birth and connections, — all of whom she disobliged by her marriage; but she was independent, and her large fortune was at her own disposal. Like many others, and in opposition to all her friends, she rejected the idea of a settlement, and used the old phrase, "Where I give my hand, I give my purse." They set off in great style, and lived to the utmost extent of their income; — they advanced in progressive expense, — and each year added something to their former extravagance.

"In the course of six years they had three children; my mother was much too gay for the duties of superintending the nursery. We were left entirely to the

care of a servant, who, luckily for us, supplied her place, as far as she could, with kindness and assiduity. We seldom saw our parents more than once a day, so numerous were their engagements; but my mother's health fell a sacrifice to such constant dissipation. She died when I was eight years of age.—My father was greatly distressed, and consoled himself by interesting himself about his children.

" I was the eldest girl, and as he was an accomplished man, he took much pains in improving me,—but this was of short duration. His habits of dissipation were too fixed to overcome; he returned to the gay world, and two years after married a great beauty, very slenderly provided for, who brought him another family in a few years, to his great annoyance. He was ordered abroad, and left us with our step-mother in a country town at the commencement of the war; but the dulness of this place was ill cal-

culated to her spirits, and love of admiration; so she left us under the care of our good servant, and an excellent governess, who watched over us with the most exemplary tenderness; and joined a gay party to Brighton, and we never saw her afterwards. For upon my father's return with advanced rank after an absence of two years, he found she had chosen another protector. Rage took possession of his mind,—he pursued the fugitives, who fled to Scotland upon the first news of his approach,—and, unmindful of his helpless children, he challenged his rival—fought—and fell.

"I was instantly sent for by his desire; for my brother, who was two years my senior, had entered the service, and was abroad. I immediately set off, attended by our good servant, whom our governess insisted should accompany me, although it greatly inconvenienced her. We travelled without resting, until we reached him in an hotel at Edinburgh.

We found him perfectly collected, but quite aware of his own danger.

"By the side of his bed sat Major, now Colonel Desburgh, who was at that time quartered in the place. He had attended my father with extreme kindness, devoting every hour he could spare from his military duties to his chamber; and it was quite astonishing to see a man, brought up from his earliest infancy in a camp, thinking of the most trifling circumstance which could amuse or alleviate the pain of his friend.

"Upon my arrival, many ladies of this truly hospitable nation, interested no doubt by my forlorn situation, came to offer us every kindness and assistance in their power. One widow lady, a Mrs. Lock, a great favourite with Colonel Desburgh, and indeed with every one who knew her, treated me with maternal tenderness. There were also many officers who visited my poor father's chamber.

Captain Barclay had never let a day pass without attending him.

"I wished much to remove him to private lodgings. — Alas! that was impossible, he died five weeks after my arrival, leaving me at the age of eighteen in a land of strangers, without protection.

"My kind Mrs. Lock, however, took me to her own house; where, with the assistance of her three amiable daughters, nearly of my own age, and of her brother, who had lately arrived from the East, I was consoled and treated with unbounded hospitality.

"I was too young to take any active management in my father's affairs, — and indeed knew nothing of them; but Major Desburgh had been admitted to his confidence, and arranged all things with him. We missed him for some time, and found that good man had asked leave of absence, merely to attend to our concerns.

"He placed the second family among

their mother's relations; and then waited upon our high maternal connections, to try to interest them in our behalf; they, however, declined the least interference, as she had by her marriage totally alienated herself from them.

" Six thousand pounds was all the residue of my mother's large fortune, and this was divided between her three children. My father's patrimony consisted of a small estate, which was sold for the second family.

" Mrs. Lock would not hear of my leaving her; and her kind brother seconded her invitation with so much benevolence, that I accepted it, and passed six months most happily in this charming family.

" Captain Barclay had been a constant visiter here; but as this hospitable mansion was open to many of the military, and to him before I knew them, I did not immediately suppose I was the attraction. He soon after offered me his

hand, and with the sanction of Colonel Desburgh, we were married from Mrs. Lock's house, he giving me away; and shortly afterwards it was concerted between these two, to surprise me with the presence of my sister and Mrs. Whitaker, our excellent governess. Most happy was the meeting; Mrs. Whitaker soon procured a very advantageous situation in Edinburgh, — and we were all as happy as possible. — Alas! it was of short duration, — my dear husband was ordered abroad, with his superior officer, Major Desburgh; and the very first accounts I received brought me the sad news of my Henry's death in the field of battle.

"This was communicated to me with all the affectionate tenderness such a calamity allowed, for it was the Colonel's pen that wrote it; — he called me his child, and assured me of his paternal regard.' One could hardly think it possible so much delicacy and gentleness could belong to so rough an exterior.

Mrs. Lock and our good Mrs. Whitaker were our comforters.

"We continued to live in Edinburgh for four years; we were noticed by the first society; and I had somewhat recovered my dejection. We were introduced, at the house of one of our most respectable acquaintance, to a Captain Langton.

"My sister Helen was beautiful as an angel; she attracted universal admiration, was all life and animation, and absolutely the pet of our society. She had refused many good offers, and seemed to have no wish on earth, but to enjoy those blessings she possessed.

"It was an evil hour when first Captain Langton declared himself her lover;—he was too handsome, too elegant to be unsuccessful. Besides, she saw him the idol of all her young acquaintance. It was considered an honour to dance with him, and he well knew his consequence. She yielded herself up, with all the ardour of her cha-

racter, to this attachment, and he became equally devoted. Great then was their dismay at the removal of his regiment; and as Helen would be of age next month, it was agreed that we should go to London, where the marriage was to take place.

"I wrote all this to Colonel Desburgh as soon as I knew it, and begged him to enquire the character of Captain Langton; and said, that unless he wrote any thing to the contrary, the ceremony would take place in London, and mentioned where he was to direct to me there.

"Langton preceded us, and took lodgings for us in Norfolk-street, and the meeting was very affectionate. Still I could not help thinking him changed. He appeared to have a good deal of business on his hands, and in a morning he looked nervous and ill. When I questioned him, he said London never agreed with him.

"Two days preceding that appointed

for the marriage, he appeared in great agitation; he said there was a majority now to be sold, but although he had large estates in Ireland, he could not command ready money enough for the purchase: he said, too, that if he could procure it, it would secure him from leaving England for some years. This was, he knew, the first of our wishes. I had my two thousand settled on myself, and Captain Langton had promised Helen's should be done so too; but this want of ready cash overturned all our measures.

"Helen, with unsuspecting confidence, instantly and generously offered her money. Alas! this, he said, was not enough; I also offered to lend five hundred pounds; and as there was no time to sell out of the funds, which I could not do without a power of attorney from Edinburgh, I borrowed the money of an officer, who readily advanced it. This was all given to him the day before the marriage. He left us early in the morning, saying, that

as he had a great deal of business to arrange, he could not see us again till eight o'clock next morning, when he desired we should be in readiness. The time came, but he came not with it:—ten — eleven — twelve o'clock, and no bridegroom. My sister, who never for an instant doubted his integrity, possessed herself with the idea of his illness — a fit — or some accident — and her distress was extreme. We sent to the Hummums, and learnt that he had not been there that night, and that his lodgings had just been paid off by another gentleman.

"My sister's agitation now became intense. The officer from whom I had borrowed the five hundred pounds came to us, and informed us, with great apparent sympathy, that Langton had passed the whole of the last night at a gaming house in St. James's street, and had lost a considerable sum of money. In fact, every sixpence we had given him was gone. He condoled with me — for Helen appeared insensible to every

thing, — some time; and at last told me that Langton had borrowed so much from him, that he really had not money enough for current expenses until my money could be paid. . .

"He expressed himself shocked beyond measure at his friend's treachery; and said so much about it, that I produced my little store of cash, which I had brought to defray my expenses in town, and carry me back again to Scotland. It was my intention to offer him half of it; but the moment he saw it, he told me that sum would relieve him from great embarrassment; and took hold of it with more eagerness than I thought consistent with the situation we were in: but my spirits were exhausted. My sister spoke not, moved not, but sat a perfect image of despair. In short the man left us, and took with him all we were worth. Two days afterwards Helen received a letter from Langton; but I have no patience to recount his poor cowardly at-

tempts to implore her forgiveness and extenuate his conduct.'

"After we had been in this situation a week, our landlady presented herself and her bill; — we had no means of discharging it. She loaded us with abuse, called us swindlers, and used dreadful language.

"During this accumulation of distress, the officer, who was now our only acquaintance in town, appeared. — I had thought his manners very presuming for the three last visits he paid us; and I now perceived a smile of exultation on his countenance, the recollection of which even now makes me shudder.

"While with tears in my eyes I besought him to procure us some relief, — "My angel," said he, "I came for that purpose. I have brought as much money as will, I make no doubt, pay your bills, and I will take you away immediately from this unfeeling woman."

"The air with which he said this, and

his endeavour to put his hand round my waist, roused my utmost indignation. "Sir," said I, "I fear of the two — we should be much more safe in her protection than your's."

"I then appealed to her, told her who we were, and endeavoured to explain to her, that I yet possessed money of my own, and should be able to get it shortly; but the inhuman wretch very coolly answered, "All I said might be very true for all she knew; but she lived by her lodgings, and if I could not pay a week, it was less likely I could pay a fortnight." A strong suspicion now arose in my mind of a collusion between them; we were quite at his mercy, and this idea overpowering me, I sunk into a seat senseless.

The pretended friend had brought a coach to the door, and had ordered my trunks to be put into it; and he proposed himself to carry me to it. My sister had remained in a state of perfect torpor ever since the first knowledge of

our disaster; but seeing our property carried off, and perceiving the dreadful state I was in, she rushed wildly down stairs and vehemently protested they should not go, placing herself between the trunks and the door.

"At this moment Colonel Desburgh entered the house, pale, dirty, and worn out with fatigue. I sprung to him, caught him round the neck, and the next instant knelt at his feet, in thankfulness to the Almighty for our deliverance. Our supposed friend, seeing a very unwelcome intruder in the Colonel, slunk off; but as he went he whispered, "You'll be so good to remember the five hundred pounds. I shall take the liberty of presenting your note of hand for it."

"As soon as he was gone, the landlady observing the dismay of her principal, altered her tone, and very humbly retired.

"When alone with the Colonel, my first impulse was to get him some refreshment. He had not received my letter till

long after the date: he only stayed to state the case to the general officer, (the very same who soon after left him a large fortune,) and then travelled night and day, merely taking such food as he could procure while he changed horses: The General had confirmed other accounts of the dissolute character of Langton; and our old friend flattered himself he yet might be in time to save Helen.

"His first question on entering the house was 'Is she married?' 'Thank God,' said he, as I whispered a negative.

"While taking such refreshment as I could offer him, I told him all our adventures without reserve: he rose in the midst of it, strode about the room, stamped, and swore the only oath I ever heard from his mouth. He then blamed me very severely for my culpable simplicity, and turned quickly round to reprimand my poor sister; but his anger was soon turned to grief, —he saw her reclined on the sofa without

any sign of life: he flew to her, pressed her to his bosom, called her his own dear child, and absolutely wept over her.

"The exertion she used in preventing the removal of our trunks, the sight of our guardian, and the recital of our disappointment, was too much for her. She had taken no nourishment, and when she did sleep she started from it in agony.

"The Colonel paid off our lodgings, &c. &c. and took us to the house of an old servant of his, who was some years married; and to whom he had lent money to commence business. We were attended with great kindness by these people, but we soon lost our generous benefactor; he was obliged to join his regiment. He had tried to institute a lawsuit against Captain Langton; but we had been so unsuspecting that we had no sort of acknowledgment for our money; and even if we had, what was to be recovered from a gamester? and such an abandoned man as he was!—our money

was gone irretrievably. Would to Heaven that *that* was my only loss, but my angel sister declined daily.

" I used every exertion to divert her mind from her sad affliction, but all her liveliness had forsaken her; and after six months of constant watching, I had the grief to see her expire in my arms.

" Oh! could the wretch have seen her at that moment, I think it must have awakened him to repentance, however hardened he was in villainy.

" Had her fortitude equalled her patient meekness, she might yet have been spared to me; but her heart and her spirit seemed absolutely broken; and though she was sensible to every kindness shown her, yet her thoughts and her hopes seemed to have taken flight to another and a better world, to which she appeared already to belong, and to which I am persuaded she most anxiously prayed to go. The happiest smile, indeed the only one I had seen on her

pale face since her desertion, was when she was told how short her days would be here. And severely as she felt her indignities, she never uttered a reproach towards Langton. Indeed she studiously avoided his name.

"Colonel Desburgh had empowered me to draw upon his banker for any money I might want, for I believe he thought the sad experience I had lately suffered would effectually deter me from being capable of future folly. I spared no expense for the comfort or health of my loved sister. After her decease, it was necessary for me to seek some method of supporting myself, and of remunerating my benevolent friend.

"My Edinburgh friends wrote me pressing invitations; but that place would recall so much of lost happiness to my mind that I could not go there.

"The people with whom the Colonel had placed me recommended my furnishing a house with my money, and letting

lodgings at such high terms as might prevent improper people coming to me. This being vacant I took it.

"When my benefactor heard what I had done, and how anxious I was to recompense him in the only way I could; and that I was paying him regularly the interest of what I had used of his money, I learnt that he had given instructions to his banker, that all sums whatever that I should pay, should be invested in my name, in the same stock where the remains of my own little property was lodged. The Colonel had also, when he was last with us, recommended his banker to me to manage my little stock; and while I thought I was furnishing my house upon my own means, I found *that* untouched, for he had ordered it should be so.

"My house became much resorted to, and I am enabled to choose my lodgers, and to spare something to my half sisters, some of whom have been unfortunate. My

brother has been with his regiment, the seventy-eighth, in India for many years; and has been prosperous. I fear, gentlemen, I have said too much of myself in this little history, but it was unavoidable. I have not mentioned the name of the officer who behaved so disgracefully, because he proved to be a distant relation of my own, and I believe, when he found it out, he was heartily ashamed of it."

Our friends professed themselves very much pleased with the interest and simplicity of her narrative, and then informed her of Colonel Langton's subsequent marriage with Mrs. Davenport; and as much as they knew of their being mutually taken in. But Mrs. Barclay could not be amused with any specimens of his ill conduct.

Though some years had passed since these distressing events, the recollection was still fresh in her memory: and not being quite so placid as her sainted sis-

ter, she said she could never hear his name with Christian forgiveness.

The next day the gentlemen breakfasted together, and after it they began to speak of Miss Mordant and Miss Delaval. Mr. Fanshaw expressed his affection for the latter in such strong terms, that Mr. Trevillyan said he wished he would make his proposals to her; and as he doubted not but that he should be accepted by Miss Mordant, he should like the two ceremonies to be celebrated on the same day; and after some little consultation and discussion, it was agreed that they should do so.

Mr. Trevillyan, however, was not quite so confident as he wished to appear. It was true Miss Mordant did not deny his visits, which were daily, — sometimes even twice a day; but she would never take them to herself, — he could very seldom meet with her alone; and she was particularly careful to let him suppose she always looked upon him as

her mother's or her brother's visitor. There was no study to please him, — no wish to interest him about herself: on the contrary, when there were young ladies present, she generally contrived to engage him with them.

It may be supposed that this conduct was not likely to fascinate a man of Mr. Trevillyan's selfish character; — but she paid no attention to any other, although she was universally followed and admired. He saw too that there were two gentlemen, the one richer, and the other higher in rank than himself, who were much captivated with her.

He set out then, half doubtful of success, to Sloane-street, and had the good fortune to learn that Mrs. Mordant was out.

The servant appeared to expect he would go away; but he asked for the young lady, and was shown to the drawing-room, where he found her employed with her pencil.

He seized the opportunity, and again renewed his offer.

She did not affect surprise, but received it with the same calmness as she would have done, had her brother sent her a present of a new work-table, or a chess-board.

She told him she knew nobody she preferred to him, and if this preference would satisfy him, she was willing to accede to his intreaty; while she gave him fully to understand, that her regard for him partook of none of that enthusiasm which accompanied her first attachment.—She was sure no being of this world could ever again excite *that*.

He accepted the terms with grateful pleasure, and soon after Mrs. Mordant came in.

Mr. Trevillyan imparted to her the nature of their conversation, and she did not withhold her thorough satisfaction on the occasion.

Company coming in disturbed this in-

teresting theme; and as they appeared to have no idea of speedily moving, and as he was too much elated with his success to join in ordinary topics, he took his leave.

Mr. Fanshaw had been equally, indeed much more affectionately received. Miss Delaval candidly confessed that she had loved him almost from the first evening of their meeting; but that supposing he would look for birth and fortune, she had never dared to construe his attentions into any-thing more than friendship; and although she found these more dear to her each day, yet she had carefully guarded against showing it.

He proposed an early day for their union, but she said she had so many things to arrange, that it could not be under two months; but she, with guileless simplicity, assured him, that she would throw no unnecessary impediments in the way.

CHAP. XII.

Who may not be crushed with a plot?
All's Well that Ends Well.

A Match in Danger. — An Exposure.

It was not until the next morning that our friends had the opportunity of informing each other of their success. Mr. Trevillyan saw his companion in such high spirits at the flattering manner in which his proposal was received, that he did not choose to confess that *his* had been less acceptable: so he did not repeat the conversation which passed between Miss Mordant and himself, but merely stated that his answer was in the affirmative; and Mr. Fanshaw was too much engrossed with his own affairs, to be very inquisitive.

He was now, like Colonel Desburgh,

while contemplating a similar event, always making memorandums in his pocket-book; but these differed from those, inasmuch as his memory was called upon to think of every thing which could add to the comfort and happiness of his chosen. But he made no parade of all this;—and from the little he ever said of Darlington, Mr. Trevillyan had no reason to suppose it any thing out of the common way, whereas in fact it was a very beautiful gentleman's seat; fortunately it was recently put into very thorough repair—but it was fitted up for a bachelor rather than a married man.

He was now therefore very busy in selecting all things which it wanted; and this occupied his time and attention so much, that he had little leisure for Mr. Trevillyan, who revenged himself upon Miss Mordant, with whom he passed most of his time.

One morning when he was reading

some travels to her while she worked, there was a description of a landscape and cascade, which she said she had lately drawn, and would like to compare it with the book. She rose and fetched a portfolio, from which she took the drawing in question. When she had done with it, Mr. Trevillyan took it from her, admired it exceedingly, and said how much her drawings would grace the saloon of Eldrington, and that he would have them all elegantly framed for that purpose.

She allowed him to amuse himself by looking over the other contents of the portfolio, and quietly went on with her work. He had nearly gone through it, when a nicely executed small picture, of a very handsome young man, presented itself to his view. A qualm of jealousy and renewed aversion to the Fortescue family darted across his mind—he had no doubt of the fact: it was a likeness of Henry, drawn by Miss Mordant from

memory. Turning to her with an expression of countenance which spoke much more than his words, he said, "These things, madam, will not, I hope, belong to Mrs. Trevillyan."

Surprised by the stern tone of his voice, she looked up to see the occasion of it, and then instantly returned,—"Certainly not, sir;" but her deep sigh did not escape his observation.—"Mrs. Trevillyan will, I hope, do her duty in every state of life she may be placed in: but," added she, with the warmth of injured feeling, "if you have the smallest doubt on the subject, my earnest advice is, to be very cautious whom you invest with that name and dignity."

She rose as she spoke, and her fine figure lost none of its grace by the upright attitude she assumed; and her face none of its beauty, by the heightened colour and animation with which she spoke. Mr. Trevillyan felt her su-

periority, his heart acknowledged it, although not much addicted to the sin of humility.

He confessed his error, and begged forgiveness; but Miss Mordant was distressed. She had hitherto considered him a good-tempered man, but the sudden alteration of his countenance had shaken her faith in this virtue. His jealousy too upon a point where she had been so very unreserved, alarmed her, and she thought no time so good as the present for an explanation.

Possibly too she had a faint hope of frightening him from the engagement; she therefore again went over the ground of her attachment to Henry Fortescue; assured him, that although she had lost him for ever, yet her memory dwelt with fond affection upon every thing which related to him; that certainly if she married him, she would conscientiously perform her duty; yet she besought him to look elsewhere for one who could re-

turn his attachment with the warmth he deserved. At any rate, she recommended that they should postpone their marriage for at least two years, which would allow him time to see others — and her to recover from the disappointment of blasted happiness.

It is very possible, that had she taken a course exactly opposite to this, — had she vowed that her affection for him now surpassed that she had felt for Henry, — had she appeared anxious for the union — our hero would have hesitated. As it was, however, he was so full of contrition and compunction for having for an instant offended her, that she had no pretence for withdrawing herself from the engagement; she therefore reluctantly forgave him, and the bridal preparations went on.

She was not, however, at all satisfied, and spoke to her mother and brother upon the subject; but here she got little sympathy, they were both strenuous

advocates for the match — and she submitted.

Mr. Fanshaw had not forgotten Mr. Lacket, who had been punctual in waiting upon him according to the appointment: he entered very unreservedly into the state of his affairs and situation; and his patron found himself in much better humour with him than he dared to hope.

The only topic upon which any difficulty arose, was the giving up of the bond between him and Miss Fenning; but this was insisted upon so peremptorily, that at last it was yielded. Mr. Lacket had paid every debt he owed previously to his intended elopement.

It appeared that he had lived with the utmost frugality — he wrote a neat and expeditious hand, and understood most of the modern languages. Mr. Fanshaw was satisfied with the modesty with which he spoke of his acquirements, and the rectitude of his sentiments: he gave him

also many very respectable names of persons who knew him, and these had attested his worth and his talents.

Mr. Fanshaw, after all this caution, felt assured of him, and gave him an introduction to a friend high in office under government. He passed a sort of examination very creditably, and was made an under-secretary.

Mr. Fanshaw then wrote to Mr. Barlow, requesting the pleasure of seeing him at his chambers the next morning, a request which was punctually attended to.

"Sir," said the old gentleman upon his entrance, "I'm glad you did not desire to see me yesterday, for I could not have done it—my daughter was married yesterday morning, and we were merry-making."

"Your daughter married!" exclaimed Mr. Fanshaw, "I'm very much surprised; and I'm sorry to have given you

unnecessary trouble, for it was about her that I wished to speak to you."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Barlow; "why, sir, you did not mean to marry the girl yourself, did you; because," added he, flattered by his own suggestion, "if the wind sits that way, I have another at your service. — I am a plain man, sir, and don't like round-about ways. I liked you, sir, as soon as I saw you. I know you have a fine property in Worcestershire; — a fine county that, sir, very fine, — I and my family went there the year before last. — We went to Malvern, I think they call it, a high parcel of mountains rising suddenly out of a very fine rich country that — but never mind that. — And so you've a mind to my daughter, eh?"

Mr. Fanshaw expressed his sense of the honour done him, and his satisfaction at recollecting that the one he meant, could not be his married daughter, but that ——

"Better and better," interrupted Mr. Barlow; "take her then — she's yours, and I'll give you t'other twenty thousand as soon as you please. Zounds! I don't know whether this will not turn out a much better match, to my mind, than the other. To say truth, I don't think she likes to see her sister married, and she no prospect: she has been quite down in the mouth for some time past, poor thing! and she's not an inch behind her sister in looks, provided she don't fret."

The old gentleman was so enchanted at the idea of marrying his favourite daughter so advantageously, that he ran on, without observing the discouragement of Mr. Fanshaw's countenance. — When he paused, however, that gentleman said, "Suppose, sir, I should give you the cause of her fretting, and afford you an insight of what has been going on under your roof, would you think me very officious?"

"By no manner of means," replied the good-natured old man; "if you would put me in the way of mending it, I and my household are bound to thank you."

Mr. Fanshaw then, with as much kindness as he could, informed him of the plot, which he imputed to Miss Fenning, and showed him the bond, by which her services were to be remunerated by the sum of two thousand pounds, from the first money he received upon his father-in-law forgiving them—or else to be paid by instalments, from the produce of any business he was placed in.

Mr. Barlow was in extreme agitation; and when he heard of the proposed elopement, he broke out into grateful thankfulness for his timely interference. He well remembered that Miss Fenning and his daughter went to a dance at Lady Burford's; that he had made an objection to his horses standing out so

late, but that it was over-ruled by his wife, who said such acquaintances were not to be got every day, so they went.

Mr. Fanshaw thought this a good opportunity to introduce his scheme, and he proposed, that if the young man continued to conduct himself properly, and was promoted in the office, that he would consent to the match.

"No, no," said the old man, "my eldest daughter was married yesterday to a baronet; it would be quite impossible to propose a beggar to my other today."

"If, as I now suppose," returned Mr. Fanshaw. "Sir John Neerdowel is your son-in-law, I fear in point of property they are pretty nearly equal, and in point of merit, my friend, I am sure, has the preponderance."

"Why, it is true," said Mr. Barlow, "his estate is rather out at elbows, but twenty thousand pounds, you know, is a nice patch upon those occasions."

"Of course you've taken care to have her fortune well secured?" said Mr. Fanshaw.

"Why to tell you the truth, I did leave something to his honour: the settlements were drawn by a friend of his in Ireland, by his desire—an agent who manages his estates; and he told me that when the mortgage was paid off, which was fifteen thousand pounds, he would be enabled to make a settlement upon his wife. I understand more of drugget and dowlas than mortgages and lands, and I believed every thing was right."

"Then I fear, my dear sir, the settlement is not worth a farthing," exclaimed Mr. Fanshaw.

"How! what the devil! not worth a farthing, O that's impossible."

Mr. Fanshaw then produced the letter which John had brought to light, and giving it to Mr. Barlow, said, "I

fear that letter, although it does not concern you or your family, will stagger your good opinion of Sir John Neerdowel, and fully develop the character of Mrs. Langton."

Mr. Barlow placed his spectacles with a trembling hand; he was shocked at what he read, — it was evident Sir John could have no affection for his daughter; and much as he loved his purse, he loved her better: — he wept as he bitterly reproached himself for want of caution.

Mr. Fanshaw was not insensible to his distress, but it was necessary the old gentleman should fully comprehend the delinquency of those around him. When the first ebullition of his indignation had subsided, he asked Mr. Fanshaw's advice how to proceed, and said he really had not the heart to speak of this terrible affair to his wife. This match had been her greatest ambition — the first wish she had. Nor did he know what to do with

Miss Fenning, or Mrs. Langton. If Mr. Fanshaw would but have the kindness to accompany him home — for really he felt quite unequal to the task before him; — and to meet his poor wife alone, and to accuse the ladies, without some friend to second him, was beyond his power: whereas, if supported by so able a man as Mr. Fanshaw, he would exert himself. Mr. Fanshaw was engaged with Miss Delaval; but his benevolence got the better of any selfish gratification.

He wrote his apology therefore to her, and accompanied his old friend to his mansion at Highgate.

CHAP. XIII.

That deceit should steal such gentle shapes, and with a virtuous vizor hide deep vice.

Richard III.

A Discovery. — A Lesson on Betting.

Upon the arrival of the gentlemen at Highgate, the master led his guest to the drawing-room, to introduce him to his wife, whom they found talking or rather listening to a bold, handsome, spirited-looking woman with great apparent curiosity. He enquired who she was, and was answered by his wife — "Why do you know, John, this person says, that she's the sister of our elegant Mrs. Langton."

"Says!" said the woman, irritated by the accent laid upon the word — which certainly implied a doubt, —

"Sure, and so I may.—You say she's out, but I don't believe *that*—so we're even there. She served me the same sauce at Southampton, and sent me ten pounds to stop my mouth—when twenty was owing me; but she said she was very poor, and yet the next week she gave a ball, as cost I don't know how many hundred pounds;—but now thirty pounds is owing me, and, I can tell you, I shan't stir a peg till I see her."

There needed little confirmation of the relationship; her features, though much more roughly cast, bore a strong resemblance to the more feminine countenance of her sister..

Mr. Fanshaw took the liberty of asking, in a conciliating tone, how "her property came to be in her sister's hands?" for his curiosity was quite afloat.

"Why, sir," replied the woman, pleased with an opportunity of interesting the company in her behalf, "if you will only hear me without looking as if

you supposed me an impostor, I'll tell you all about it. — My sister was younger than me, and she was called by some handsomer, — at least father and mother thought so. They were quite proud of her, and made me a drudge, while she was to be my lady; — and, I must say. she took to it rarely: she gave herself airs, and dressed fine, while I was to do all the work of the house, dirty or clean; and she used to flout me if her clothes was not washed — to be sure the airs she did give herself! — So, thinks I to myself, madam, you may wash your own clothes next time for me; for if I work I'll be paid for it. — So she began quarrelling, and father and mother they took Becky's part — so I went up stairs and dressed myself, and out I set; and before I came home again, I was engaged to be an under nurse-maid. Two years after, sister went to the play, and sat in the pit, close to a private box, where there was an old, gouty man: however he

came to her, and followed her home, and soon after offered to make her his mistress; but Beck, she thought if she held out a little, she might get him to marry her, or at least make her own terms for a mistress; and, truth, she had not been at school so long for nothing — she behaved very cleverly, and soon found her power. — Father he lectured him, when he found how far he was gone. They say old fools are the worst of fools; and so it proved here. He married her, — I was kept out of the way; — I suppose they feared for him to see me; but they needn't, — I would not have touched him with a pair of tongs, not I; — but when I heard of the marriage, I went to brother Davenport, and told him who I was, and that I had now got a first-rate nursery-place in a family where he visited — that my wages were twenty guineas, which I made near thirty-five; — but as I supposed he would not choose to have his sister a servant in the house he came

to, I thought perhaps he would give me something independent like. — He asked how many more claims he was likely to be plagued with?—so I told him, no more, beside father, mother, self, and a few cousins. — Father and mother is since dead, — and she never went into mourning for 'em. — However, Davenport agreed to allow me forty guineas per annum, — I begged hard for fifty; — but he said, that should be as I behaved, — and if I never gave him any trouble: — then, sir, says I, when you die, what am I to do then? — He was a good-natured man, so he burst out a laughing — told me he saw his sister was no fool, and that he would leave it to me for life. When he died, my quarter's payment was just due; and when I asked young Davenport for it, he said the will gave it to my sister, in trust for me."

Just as she finished these words, a loud rapping at the street-door announced the arrival of company; and a mo-

ment after Mrs. Langton, in a very elegant morning dress, entered hastily.

"I was told, ma'am," said she, without looking round her, "that a lady waited for me—Mrs. Dundas, I suppose; where is she?—not gone, I hope!"

"No indeed, *Becky*,"—Mrs. Langton had long since dropped that odious name for *Maria*,—"I am not gone—here I am, Becky, your own sister, lass! come, give us a kiss."

The touch of a scorpion could not have been more distressing to her. She drew herself back with horror and astonishment.—Young Barlow was at her elbow, and she now saw Mr. Fanshaw an interested spectator of the scene, and truth obliges us to say, that we believe he was not a little gratified with it.

At that moment, all the vanity of personal charms sank to nothing; and glad would she have been, could the floor beneath have opened, and hid her for ever.—In any other circumstances, she

would have devised some means of extricating herself; here she was taken by surprise, and had nothing to say. — At last, quite subdued, she whispered, "Jane, suppose you and I go into another room?"

"No, no, Beck," said the obdurate dun, "I'm very well contented here, I thank you;" and she enjoyed her sister's dismay: "I've told these gentlefolk my story, and the business I came upon; so now tell 'em yours, and then they will say which is right, you or me."

Vexed, mortified, and enraged, our beauty burst into tears, and rushed out of the room.

"Well, who could have thought it?" said Mrs. Barlow, before the door was closed behind her, — "who could have thought we should be so imposed upon! — to see the impudence of some people! — If I did not all along take her to be some high-bred person of fashion! — or I'm sure I should not have noticed her

as I have done. My son, Sir John Neer-dowel! what will he say? I do think it was a most owdacious thing,—her putting herself upon us in this way."

Young Barlow could not recover his surprise. He fancied himself desperately in love, and could hardly believe his own eyes. He went to the window to hide his emotion.—Mr. Fanshaw, whose curiosity was now quite satisfied, began to compassionate the humiliated fair one, and advised her sister to follow her, which she did.—He then whispered to Mr. Barlow, that, fearing too many surprises at once may distress his wife, he thought it better to send for Miss Fenning and her pupil to his private room, where they should meet them, and acquaint Mrs. Barlow with the affair after dinner. To this proposition his host gladly assented. The guilt of the governess was brought home to her, and exposed to the astonished young lady, who with many tears confessed her attachment to

Mr. Lacket, but, very ingenuously added, that, dear as he was to her, if he was so dishonourable and ungenerous to love her merely for her expected fortune, she would remain single all her life; for she never would marry any other. Her wan cheek and swollen eyes bore testimony to the strength of her regard for him.

Mr. Fanshaw took a warm interest in this young lady, from the innocence and sincerity of her confession. He took an opportunity of informing her, that he thought highly of Mr. Lacket, and would use all his interest to promote the match. Miss Barlow could not immediately speak, but she turned her eyes filled with tears upon him, and he felt fully repaid for his services.

Soon after, she asked him why it was that she had not heard from her lover? He explained their meeting, and gave such satisfactory answers, that her pride was satisfied, and her affection soothed.

Miss Fenning was paid, and turned adrift within an hour; and she was glad to escape so easily.

Dinner was soon after announced, and they found an addition to their party — Mrs. Samuel Barlow, the widow of his brother; her daughter Suky, a pretty, awkward, uncouth looking girl; and her son, the identical Ned Barlow, whom his aunt had, at the table at Southampton, compared with the officious Mr. Watson.

There were some others at table, but Mrs. Langton did not make her appearance.

Mr. Fanshaw found himself placed between the two mistresses Barlow: as soon as dinner was removed, to which Mrs. Samuel did ample justice, she attacked our hero.

" Mr. Fanshaw, Sir, I'm informed that you know my nephy, Sir John Neerdowel — what a handsome man he is! — Do you know, they say my son Ned is very like

him — I can't say I see it, — Ned would not change heads with him, I can tell you that, — the inside lining, I mean, ha! ha! you understand me — he's very clever, Sir! — 'Twas a hard case, Mr. Fanshaw, — me and mine was left very low in the world. My husband, Sir, kept that large oil-shop, you must remember, in Fetter-lane. At his death, Ned and me we took heart, Mr. Fanshaw, and kept it on, — and a very pretty thing we make of it: it's now one of the best shops in London; and we've the best of sperm-oil, Sir; — if you ever burn it, you'll find your end in using ours; and we'll take the trouble of sending it to your house, to oblige you. I've another son, Mr. Fanshaw, — Jack, called after his uncle there, who is just sat up in the attorneying line, and as sister tells me you belong to the same genteel *pur*fession yourself, may be you can throw a job now and then in Jack's way. 'Twould be very kind in

you, Mr. Fanshaw; — Jack's very secret, and would be very grateful."

Our hero made the best answer he could, and the ladies retired.

Mrs. Barlow found a note on the drawing-room table, from Mrs. Langton, informing her, that having a little business to transact in town, she hoped she would excuse her sudden departure.

The two sisters amused themselves by talking over her "*ow*dacity."

Miss Suky fell asleep; and Miss Barlow went to her own dressing-room, to ruminate in solitude upon the events of the morning.

In the dining-room Mr. Fanshaw was not very much edified, although he possessed much greater versatility of manners than his friend Trevillyan. He could, upon occasion, bend himself to the society he happened to be placed in; generally extracting something for amusement, and for gaining a more thorough knowledge of mankind.

But the nephy, "Ned," of whom so much boast had been made, was so vulgarly pushing and familiar, that he frequently required a repulse to keep him in decent order. He observed a maggot from a filbert on Mr. Fanshaw's plate; and interrupting the conversation, called out, "Fanshaw, I'll bet you a guinea my maggot beats yours in a race — come, put it here."

"Sir," coldly answered Mr. Fanshaw, with great haughtiness, "I never bet," and immediately resumed the conversation.

"Well, that's so odd now," returned Ned; "but I'm glad all people 'aint of your way of thinking. Why," (raising his voice so as to overpower every other), "I gained ten guineas from young Shallowit the day before yesterday; and I'll tell you how I did it. He offered, the night before, to stake that sum, that my dog Vixen would not pup as soon as his. So yesterday morning she took ill. So

I instantly set off, without staying to wait the event; for that would not have been honourable; and took the bet. I detained him at his shop some time, and then brought him home, when the first news we heard was, that she had got four pups; so I made him pay down the ten guineas.—What do you say to that?" asked he, exultingly looking for approbation where he was the least likely to meet with it. Mr. Fanshaw sat in contemptuous silence.

"Why I say," said an elderly man from the lower end of the table, "that you're a clever lad, and no doubt will one day become a great man."

"I'll tell you another," said Ned: "I had——"

"No, no, Ned," said Mr. Barlow, observing the displeasure marked on Mr. Fanshaw's countenance, "we'll have no more of your stories; and if you had stopped before you gave us this, 't would have been as much for your credit."

Ned, however, did not like the hint; or at least was not disposed to mend by it. So he turned to his cousin, the elegant Oxonian dandy, and boisterously slapping him on the shoulder, said, "Why what makes you so mum, my boy—and, by the way, where is your pink of perfection, Madam Langton? One of the servants was telling me an odd story about her afore dinner;—she that gave herself so many airs and graces. Miss Fenning used to call her the Dandyzette,—a very good name for her:—for my part, I never saw any of your dandies," eyeing his cousin's dress; "but I ask myself what they are good for. I bet you five guineas that Tom Shallowit is dressed more of a gentleman than you'll find in all Oxford put together; and Fanshaw there shall be the judge."

"Really, Sir," said young Barlow, imitating as nearly as he could Mr. Fanshaw's manner, "I never bet;" and turned away just as that gentleman had

done; then suddenly thinking that he could improve upon the original, he contemptuously added, "few *gentlemen* do, I believe." This appeared to nettle his cousin. Mr. Fanshaw rose and left them to it.

On entering the drawing-room, he found the two ladies still engaged in finding out defects in Mrs. Langton; who, until this day, had none in the eyes of Mrs. Barlow. Miss Suky was still sleeping; but not having taken the exact attitude of the Venus, her mother was shocked, and reprimanded her.

"Law, mother," said she, gaping and rubbing her eyes, "if you had done as much as I have to-day, you'd be sleepy too."

"Pray tell us, Suky, my dear," said her aunt, "what have you been about to-day, that you're so tired?"

"Why aunt," said the unblushing girl, "I drank two tumblers of Edinburgh ale at luncheon, and then walked here; and

if that 'aint enough to make one sleepy, I know not what is."

Old Mr. Barlow then, as preconcerted, gave his sister-in-law a hint, that Mr. Fanshaw was come there upon business, and that if she and her party would favour them with her company to-morrow, he should take it kindly.

"O aye, certainly," replied the lady, smirking in Mr. Fanshaw's face. "I should be sorry to be the one too many on these occasions; however, you are very sly: you think I can't guess the business; and I suppose, if I had not happened to drop in to-day, I should never have heard a word of the matter, till the clothes was bought. But some folks can see into a mill-stone, as well as another; however, I shall be glad of another pair of gloves, and some cake.— my niece, Lady Neerdowel's, was excellent, only Suky got into the cupboard and made herself sick,—poor thing! I hope she'll do as well as her cousins."

Mrs. Barlow, to whom all this was Greek, stood staring with her eyes and mouth wide open; turning first to Mrs. Samuel, then to her husband, and then to Mr. Fanshaw, with the most ludicrous surprise; but, obtaining no information from either, and seeing her husband's impatience to get rid of them, she wished them "good night;" and the lady made her exit, followed by Neddy, and Suky, and all.

Mr. Fanshaw then opened the sorrowful budget of disasters he had to lay before her; and it was well for Miss Fenning, that she had taken her departure before Mrs. Barlow's abuse could reach her. The poor woman was furious, little supposing that any blame could attach to herself on the occasion, either for taking Miss Fenning into her house upon such slight recommendation as Lady Burford gave, or for her duplicity in hiding the masquerade from her husband; but when our hero pleaded for his *protegé*,

she vented all the anger upon him, which was due to herself. Mr. Fanshaw let her go on 'till she had no more to say — Reader, we hope you will set down patience as his attribute — and then gave her the sad history of Sir John Neerdowel, whom he represented as a gambler, if not a complete swindler.

This raised her indignation to its utmost pitch; and she angrily replied, "that he was a *Barnet*, and it was not likely a gentleman of his rank and consequence would behave so; that she would not believe a word of it, and, John," added she, as if she had just got a new light, "I wonder where is your senses gone; don't you see Mr. Fanshaw is only playing a trick on you, to make you consent to his scheme? I should like to know what he is to get by that! — one must suspect every body now. But I'll tell you what, Sir, deep as you think yourself, you'll find folks in this house as can match you. I won't

believe a word of it; and when my son Sir John Neerdowel turns out the villain you say, why then, John and me, we'll consent to our daughter marrying Mr. Lacket, — wont we, John?" — but John groaned, instead of acquiescing.

Mr. Fanshaw, far from resenting the rudeness and affront offered him, sincerely pitied the poor woman. He begged her to remember her promise; which he feared he should soon have the opportunity of calling upon her to perform.

She repeated it, but in a tone somewhat subdued; for the countenance of her husband had in a slight degree shaken her confidence.

Mr. Fanshaw then rang for his carriage; and, as Mr. Barlow attended him to it, he begged him to excuse his poor wife, whose feelings had mastered her hospitality and politeness.

Our hero assured him, that he felt too much for them to take any thing amiss;

that he could not give up the hope of obtaining the consent for Mr. Lacket's marriage; and desired the old man to talk it over with his wife; and to call upon him, if ever he could be useful to him. They then cordially shook hands and separated, mutually pleased with each other.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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